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JANUARY 1937.

FROM THE HILL.

*Here at my feet the rich and mellow earth
Of England rolls into the golden sky,
A land of twilight, drowsed with summer mirth,
Warm with the sun, and glowing hazily :*

*And each faint pulse that, trembling upward, shakes
Softly this high hill where I dream alone,
Each pulse of thy slow heart, my England, wakes
A full though feeble echo in my own.*

*Ah, dost thou sleep, my England, dost thou dream
Of those innumerable hosts that strayed
Long since in slow and ever-changing stream
O'er thy old soil by centuries relaid ?*

*They trod thy lands, and fought and laughed and cried,
Kings, peasants, courtiers, the great and small—
Like streams that mingle with the ageless tide
Into thy bosom thou receiv'dst them all.*

*Oh England, when the happy years have passed,
And I am old and tired, and sing no more,
And when my little stream has joined at last
That sad smooth river flowing to the shore,*

*Thou wilt receive me, too, that loved thee best :
Thine arms will open tenderly to fold
My ashes to thee, and thy gentle breast
Will warm again this heart in Death grown cold :*

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*Thou wilt receive me, when my song is done,
Thy rich blood creep along my leaden veins,
Thy roots entwine and draw me from the sun
To live once more where thy dark spirit reigns :*

*Thou wilt receive me, and the little voice
That once was raised upon this old green hill
Will with those other nobler choirs rejoice
That through thy vaults, my England, echo still :*

*Then one great song shall leave those myriad lips
And burst from thy dark vaults to which I pass—
One wild, high strain, thrown from the mountain tips
Through leagues of light to leap among the stars.*

*And when the mighty echoes of that song .
Are drawn at last down to the voiceless deep
To perish there, then to the shadowy throng
I too shall sink, and with thy dead shall sleep.*

JULIAN TENNYSON.

DUCK LUCK.

BY PHILIP ARNALL.

As a small, smudgy-faced child of seven years old, Flying Officer Freddie Daye was looking out of his nursery window on the second floor, and inspecting with interest a bath chair which stood on the pavement far below just in front of the garden railings. For some reason the bath chair, although at the time in that part of London there were still quite a number of them about, fascinated him, and he felt that it would also fascinate the small teddy bear he had in his arms. So he held the teddy bear out of the window so that it could see the bath chair more clearly and examine it at leisure. Unfortunately Freddie Daye held the teddy bear so far out that he lost his balance and toppled clean out of the second-floor window. He fell rapidly to the first floor, where he grazed a window-box and, as he had just had breakfast, bounced off it. He bounced outwards and fell towards the spiked railings in front of the small London garden. A spike caught his little woollen coat which was buttoned tightly round him. This woollen coat acted as an efficient arrester gear, rather in Fleet Air Arm deck-landing style, and the net result was that, still clutching the teddy bear, he was deposited with very little shock into the seat of the bath chair which had its tarpaulin cover turned back as if ready to receive him.

Naturally he was delighted at finding himself in the bath chair which had interested him, and so was the teddy bear, and nothing infuriated him more than when his nurse staggered out of the house with a face as white as a sheet,

rushed upon him, lifted him from the bath chair, and clutching him to her bosom, burst into tears.

That early experience epitomised Freddie Daye's subsequent career in the Royal Air Force. For no man crashed more spectacularly and more often, or survived his crashes more obstinately and more miraculously than he. Everyone who has served in the Air Force knows that there are people who are always crashing yet who possess a streak of luck which seems to make them immune from injury in the most appalling accidents. And such is the perversity of the average pilot's mental outlook that nothing appeals to his sense of humour more than a really bad crash, costing the State anything up to £15,000, from which the pilot emerges unscratched and usually in a vile temper. At the experimental station where he had been posted Freddie Daye's propensity for narrow escapes would have been looked upon in the same way as a gift for playing the piccolo, as a natural aptitude designed for the amusement of all ranks, had it not been for his solemn insistence that his survival of crashes which would have killed half a dozen ordinary people was not due to luck or to skill, but to the mystical charms exercised by a long line of mascots.

This astonishing belief may have been connected in some complicated way with his childhood experience. Possibly that teddy bear that went from the second story with him and arrived safely in the bath chair had left an impress on his unconscious mind. The cause might have been dragged out by a psycho-analyst, but, so far as his brother air force officers were concerned, Freddie's belief was just an obstinate and idiotic superstition. Flight Lieutenant William Broadsell was particularly impatient with it. He was stimulated to protest more forcibly than usual by an incident connected with the Demon two-seater fighter which he had in his

Flight and which he reserved so much as possible for his own use.

It was particularly well kept, this Demon, and whenever a fitter had nothing else to do he was almost sure to be turned on to polishing up the Demon or making some minor fitting for it. Not even the boot-scraper outside the C.O.'s office was more carefully tended. Broadsell was happiest when he had found some excuse for making a cross-country flight in this machine or when he was simply over the aerodrome throwing it about with a friend in the back seat. So he was not pleased when it became necessary to detail Freddie Daye to do flying trials of a new gunner's wind-vane sight with this identical machine. He would have done all the trials himself and enjoyed it, but the new Stayne twin-engined bomber had arrived, and its partial climbs, and climbs and speeds had to be rushed through as quickly as possible. So Broadsell had been forced to do most of the flying of the Stayne himself and could not spare the time to do the sight tests with the Demon.

'Now don't go and bend it,' he cautioned Freddie Daye when he handed the Demon over. 'And watch that rough period at about three-quarters throttle. If you keep off that she runs like a bird.'

Freddie Daye promised to take great care of the Demon, but Broadsell watched him take off with misgivings. His beautiful aeroplane was being risked, as he saw it, by being piloted by one who had had some of the nastiest crashes in Air Force history; who had made a positive habit of crashing. He watched the Demon climbing to the westward until it was almost out of sight and then he turned to the Stayne bomber and prepared to begin his trials.

When he came down again from the climb, still feeling rather blue with the cold, he found his beloved Demon

safely in the shed. Directly he had got rid of his parachute he went over to see that it had not been harmed in any way. He climbed into the cockpit. Everything seemed as usual. He looked forward through the windscreen, and then something caught his eye. Attached to the rear port centre section strut with a length of copper wire was a very small brown teddy bear. Broadsell looked at it furiously for a moment. Then he unwound the wire and took it off the strut. He climbed out of the machine and went to the Flight Office, where Daye was sitting in a chair with his feet on the desk, talking to the M.O. who was leaning against the wall smoking his pipe.

'Look here, Freddie,' said Broadsell, his round red face redder than usual, 'I do wish you wouldn't clutter up good aeroplanes with things like this.' He handed him the teddy bear.

'Good lor', answered Freddie, looking at it and then putting it in his pocket, 'I clean forgot I'd left it.'

'It's just damn' silliness.'

'It hasn't hurt your precious Demon, has it?'

'No. It hasn't hurt it, but I mean the whole thing is so idiotic. The way you clutter up machines with these dratted mascots. It's positively childish, Freddie.'

'If you'd had the experiences I've had, Bill, you'd know there's a mysterious sort of influence in mascots.'

'Influence my aunt! Anyway, I wish you wouldn't clutter up "A" Flight machines with them.'

'It's all right, I know you don't believe in 'em. Some people don't.'

'But good heavens, Freddie, you're not telling me in this year of grace that you really, honestly and genuinely *believe* that a dratted teddy bear can pull you out of a scrape, are you?'

‘One has a mysterious feeling that there’s a sort of influence in them.’

‘What on earth . . .’

‘Who knows?’ interposed the M.O. pacifically, for he noticed thunder in the air; ‘there may be.’

‘Ah, Doc,’ said Freddie, quickly turning to him, ‘I’m glad you believe in mascots.’

‘Well, I don’t know if I’d go so far as to say that,’ hurriedly explained the M.O., whose reputation for a scientific outlook appeared to be at stake, ‘I mean that we simply don’t know anything about luck or whether there is such a thing.’

‘Luck!’ said Broadsell scornfully. ‘Bah! Common sense and keeping your head. They’re worth a darn sight more than all the mascots in the world.’

‘I can give you seven different occasions when I’ve been saved by having the right mascot with me,’ said Freddie—‘seven. And that’s not counting the time I missed that train and there was a crash on the line the very next week.’

‘It’s not your dratted mascots, Freddie, it’s just that you happen to be disgustingly, almost obscenely, lucky. In flying, mascots don’t count.’

‘Don’t you remember when I was taking that Bulldog down to Farnborough?’

‘The one you wrapped round a tree at Romford?’

‘Yes.’

‘Oh. You call that lucky, do you?’

‘I had a mysterious feeling that crash was fated. And I found later that at the time Farnborough aerodrome was covered in a dense fog.’

‘Well?’

‘Why, don’t you see? If I’d gone on and got there I should probably have been killed trying to land in the fog.’

If that wasn't the result of having my mascot with me I should like to know what it was.'

'Oh, have it your own way. But remember this, Freddie, while I'm O.C. "A" Flight I'm not going to have good aeroplanes cluttered up with mascots. Drat it all, we shall be playing trains next.'

'That's quite all right, Bill, I can carry my teddy bear in my pocket. As a matter of fact it's safer that way because then one never forgets it. I've a sort of mysterious feeling that if I ever went up without a mascot I should be for it.'

Broadsell turned in disgust and left the office, expressing his opinion upon Freddie's belief in mascots by slamming the door. He was walking out of the shed on to the tarmac when the M.O. joined him.

'I should like to have a word with you about Freddie's mascots,' he said seriously to Broadsell. Broadsell looked at him.

'Heavens alive, Doc, *you're* not going to start telling me there's something in mascots, are you?'

'It's not that at all. What I want to ask you is not to chaff Freddie about it too much. People who let themselves believe in mascots and other superstitions get a sort of psychological support from their belief sometimes. It may not be exactly good for them, but I don't see that it does them any harm. And it may help. After all, few of us are quite free from superstitions of some kind or other. I seem to remember, Bill, hearing you say that you wouldn't fly in anything other than that disreputable old helmet of yours.'

'That's utterly and completely different, Doc. That's only because it's got kind of moulded to the shape of my head in all these years and it's comfortable.'

'Anyhow, it's of no importance. But highly strung people do get strange fancies and it never did any good

yet trying to knock sense into them by brute force. I should leave Freddie's mascots alone.'

'I'm simply not going to have his dratted teddy bears stuck all over my Demon.'

'Remember Freddie has had some narrow shaves. They'd be enough to make anybody go superstitious. Plenty of quite sensible people refuse to light three cigarettes with the same match or to walk under ladders. You could find a dozen people like that among the pilots of this station.'

'What annoys me about Freddie, though, is that he genuinely *believes* in his mascots. Other people look on the whole thing as rather a joke. But he's deadly serious. He thinks that teddy bear's stuffed full of hoodoo.'

Nevertheless, by adroit pleading, the M.O. contrived to make Broadsell promise not to chaff Freddie Daye any more about his mascots. And there can be little doubt that it was that promise, and the constraint under which Broadsell felt himself, that led a fortnight afterwards to the peculiar happenings with the twin-engined Stayne bomber. Prior to those happenings, however, Freddie had done something which strained Broadsell's self-control almost to bursting-point and, as will be seen when the facts are given, not without cause.

On the Saturday before Freddie Daye was detailed to do handling trials with the Stayne bomber, he went up to London in his small saloon motor-car on week-end leave. It was, fortunately as things turned out, a very old saloon motor-car. Freddie Daye's method of driving consisted in pressing the accelerator pedal down to the floorboards and holding it permanently there and altering speed mainly by changing gear. He explained that this method was the 'most efficient' because a petrol engine was really a constant

speed engine and should be used as nearly as possible at constant revolutions. Whether it was efficient or not it was certainly dangerous, and nobody was in the least surprised, when the Sunday papers appeared in the Mess, to read that a saloon motor-car driven by Flying Officer Frederick Daye, of the Royal Air Force, had left the road while driving near Windsor on Saturday night and had plunged into the River Thames.

Nor were they surprised to learn that Freddie Daye had by some means extricated himself from the saloon, risen to the surface and swum ashore. Everything was exactly what one would expect to happen when Freddie Daye went motoring. He had not suffered the smallest injury and had given fluent interviews to more than one newspaper report, speaking about a sudden failure of the car's headlights at a bend in the road. When immersed he had had no difficulty in finding and undoing the door of the car and he had at once risen to the surface. He had been about to strike out with the crawl stroke for the bank when his hand touched something, and he found that a brown-paper parcel containing an article of great value that he had purchased that morning had somehow got out of the car and also floated to the surface. He grasped this and took it ashore with him. Attempts were to be made to save the car.

When Freddie Daye appeared in the Mess late that evening, having come back from London by train, he was greeted with acclamation. But he was very modest about it all. When they asked him how he found the door handle and got it open and how he managed to hold his breath so long and a host of other questions, he said that he had no clear recollection of what had happened. But it did not seem very difficult. He had got some water in his right ear, but that was all. Anyhow, he knew everything would be all

right, and, he added cryptically, the fact that his parcel had come to the surface had proved that there was no risk.

‘What was in the parcel?’ asked Wallasley.

‘Something for the girl friend?’ hazarded somebody else.

‘Freddie’s little bathing-drawers,’ was another suggestion.

Freddie glanced timidly at Broadsell but said nothing. There was a chorus of guesses and questions.

‘As a matter of fact,’ Freddie eventually admitted, ‘it was a china duck.’

‘A *what*?’

‘A china duck.’

‘Now we know why Freddie did his submarine act,’ cried Wallasley. ‘He was diving for his dinner. Quack, quack; qua, qua, quack!’

‘It was a new mascot I’d just bought and it certainly brought me luck.’

‘Going full tilt into the Thames *is* lucky,’ said Broadsell sarcastically, but the M.O. looked sternly at him.

‘Freddie means: river, duck, swim, float, quack, quack, saved!’ commented Wallasley, ‘don’t you, Fred?’

‘Let’s have a look at this wonderful duck,’ said Broadsell, and there was a roar of approval and Wallasley burst into a series of deafening quacks.

Freddie protested, made excuses, tried to change the subject; but to no purpose. It was agreed that the duck should be formally introduced to the Mess. So Freddie went over to his room and the M.O. seized the opportunity to appeal to the Mess in general and Broadsell in particular not to go too far.

‘A fellow who’s just been in the river isn’t fit for too much funny business,’ he said. ‘So keep the soft pedal down.’

‘Going into rivers is nothing to Freddie,’ remarked

Wallasley. 'That man would have a bad crash if you gave him a sewing machine—and come up smiling with the bobbin.'

Freddie returned with a cardboard box which he opened. From it he took a china duck and placed it on the table, after pushing aside the papers to make a clear space in the middle.

Everybody gazed at it. There was a slight titter, but in general the reception of the duck was undemonstrative. Broadsell strove manfully to conceal his distaste, but he was being severely tried.

It was an ordinary china duck of the kind that can be seen on the mantelpiece at almost any seaside lodging-house. It was about six inches long, with a flat bottom which created, or was apparently intended to create, the illusion that it was floating on the surface of a pond. Its neck was stretched well back and the face bore the expression of fatuous self-satisfaction which has ever been the mark of the china duck. Nothing more offensively snobbish and smug could well be imagined than the expression on the face of that duck. Freddie looked at it lovingly—at least Broadsell swore afterwards that his expression was a loving one. Everybody else looked at it in mingled amazement and revulsion.

It sat there in the middle of the papers as if it owned the place. The colouring was brilliant and of a kind to which no real duck could ever have aspired. The eyes were fixed in a supercilious stare, and above all there was that offensive look of superiority and contempt.

As people bent over the table to peer more closely at the duck Freddie got nervous and took it up and reverently put it back in its cardboard box. Mumbling something about having to write some letters, he took it away to his

room. . Perhaps it was fortunate he went when he did.

For Broadsell's red face had by that time reached about the limit of redness and was turning blue. As the door closed, he found it impossible, in spite of the M.O., to restrain himself any longer. He banged a huge fist down on the place where, a moment before, the duck had rested in insufferable self-content.

'If he puts that dratted duck in any "A" Flight aeroplane,' he roared, 'I'll . . . I'll . . .' He struggled for the right phrase and then bellowed: '. . . I'll *drown* it.'

'Quack, quack,' said Wallasley.

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It was customary when the handling trials of new types of aeroplane had to be done, to obtain the opinions of at least four different pilots. When Freddie Daye was called upon to do this work he was usually the last one of the group. He did his trials just prior to the drawing up of the report. Broadsell never specifically stated that the reason Freddie always came last was that he was nervous about his crashing propensities; but it was tacitly assumed that that was at any rate one reason.

The Stayne bomber had completed its performance trials and handling reports had been drawn up by Broadsell, Wallasley and another member of the Flight and, finally, Freddie Daye was instructed to do some flying in it and make out his report. He made his first flight on a fine day, with a clear blue sky through which sailed huge cumulus clouds, of dazzling whiteness. A sharp north-east wind was blowing across the aerodrome, so that it was necessary to take off from the speed-course timing-hut in the direction of the water tower, a high steel lattice structure, with the water tank on top, situated about fifty yards from 'B' Flight shed. It is, of course, a proven fact of flying that

if there is a high structure in the vicinity of an aerodrome, it will exercise a magnetic attraction upon all aeroplanes. The water tower, which was then having its top repaired, had already neatly sliced a small piece off the wing of a single-seater fighter and many people had missed it by inches when taking off and landing.

Broadsell, giving Freddie Daye his instruction, had noticed that the wind direction meant taking off towards the water tower.

'Take the full run of the aerodrome,' he cautioned, 'and remember to give yourself a clear margin from the water tower. Now if you get in I'll come with you and show you the gadgets. You'll be taking up Moore and Lindsell in the gunners' cockpits.'

Freddie Daye, in his flying-kit and wearing his parachute, lumbered into the Stayne and groped his way along the fuselage to the pilot's cockpit in the extreme nose. Broadsell came after him. In the cockpit Broadsell pointed out the controls, made some comments upon the instrument readings and the habits of the machine in a sharp right-hand turn and then started to clamber back along the narrow fuselage. Meanwhile Moore and Lindsell, in flying-kit and parachutes, had taken their places in the gunners' cockpits.

At the first bay Broadsell turned round to call back to Freddie Daye :

'You needn't stay up long ; but don't forget to try both right- and left-hand spins. That's really all that matters. And get a general impression of the ailerons.'

'Right !' called back Freddie Daye.

'Remember that water tower when you're taking off.'

'Yes.'

Broadsell had nearly reached the trap when he observed in the netting which was fixed to the side of the fuselage

for the carriage of such things as maps, a small cardboard box. For some reason the cardboard box attracted his attention. He seemed to remember having seen it before and he wondered what it was.

He took it from the netting and opened it.

Inside, gazing at him with exactly the same expression of supercilious contempt, was Freddie Daye's china duck. Quickly Broadsell stuffed it into his tunic pocket and, with a faint smile on his face, got out of the machine.

He stood on the tarmac watching Freddie start up his two engines, run them up and begin to taxi out. As the Stayne moved away a momentary anxiety crossed his mind. He had taken Freddie Daye's mascot away. But he reassured himself; for Freddie thought that mascot was still there, so that he had done nothing of which the M.O. would disapprove. But supposing . . . He laughed shortly. How easy it was to become superstitious! To think that he, William Broadsell, should even for a fraction of a second imagine that Freddie Daye's safety could in any way be influenced by whether or not he carried a china duck in the machine with him! He thrust all thought of china ducks out of his mind and watched the take-off.

In accordance with the instructions Freddie taxied to the extreme leeward boundary before turning and opening up for the take-off. The machine rose easily, for it was not carrying full load. It made towards the water tower. It seemed to Broadsell to be making straight for it. He caught his breath. Then he saw that in fact there was a clearance of a hundred feet or more and sighed with relief. The Stayne passed the water tower and climbed steadily and Broadsell saw the undercarriage retract. Evidently all was well. Yet he remained out on the tarmac watching, as the aeroplane, now at a steep angle, climbed up through the

gaps between the cumulus clouds. And still he stood there when, having gained enough height, Freddie Daye began his handling trials.

In contrast to the anxiety with which Broadsell had watched the take-off, Freddie Daye in the machine had felt comfortable and confident. Indeed, he rarely felt other than confident on such occasions. He climbed the Stayne at full throttle to 9,000 feet and then did some vertically banked figure of eights to try the ailerons and rudder. He did a couple of straight stalls and found the machine answering well in the subsequent dives and pulling out fairly quickly, considering the relatively small wing area.

He signed to Moore, who signed back and passed the message on to Lindsell. Then he gently stalled the Stayne and, at the last moment, banged on left rudder. She toppled over rather slowly and began a spin to the left, rotating at moderate speed. Freddie took careful note of the machine's behaviour as it spun. There was no excessive judder and the spin was slow and anything but vicious. After four turns he eased the stick forward and she levelled out into a dive. Then he climbed again to make a right-hand spin and went through the same procedure.

The spin began in almost exactly the same way as the left-hand one ; but after the first turn Freddie noticed that the rate of rotation was increasing. He held the controls fully over and took careful note of what was happening. At the third turn the rate had greatly increased and the bomber was whirling round faster than a single-seater fighter, with the rate of turn still increasing.

At the fourth turn the bomber was whirling round so that the clouds and ground in front of him looked to Freddie like a roulette wheel. The rate of rotation was still going up and he decided to extricate the machine. He eased the

stick forward. Nothing happened. The machine spun with steadily increasing speed ; whirling round rhythmically. He applied opposite rudder. And as he did so he realised that the virtue had gone out of the controls. The stick felt to his touch like the hand of a dead man. The weights in the machine were taking charge and flinging out like governors, turning the spin into a terrifically fast flat spin. The ground whirled faster and faster ; whirling, whirling, whirling.

Freddie rocked the stick. There was no response. He hacked the rudder this way and that. He snatched the throttles open and shut—for that is supposed to be one of the methods for extricating a machine from a flat spin ; but the engines merely produced violent vibration, vibration likely to disintegrate the machine. Freddie saw that a great deal of his precious height had gone. And still the Stayne fell, whirling round in a sickening rotation. His altimeter read less than 6,000 feet. He flung the controls from side to side and knew by the feel even as he did so that there was no virtue in them. A horrible sensation of helplessness came over him as the machine whirled round. He snatched again at the engine throttles with no result. He held the stick right forward against the dash and repeatedly kicked left rudder. His efforts were unavailing. The spin had developed to a tremendous speed of rotation, the machine, at a fairly flat angle, whirling round and losing height rapidly.

Freddie turned to Moore, who was regarding him through his goggles with anxiety.

‘Jump !’ he yelled.

And ‘Jump !’ yelled Moore back to Lindsell.

Moore flung himself out of the whirling machine, and still Freddie frantically rocked the controls, hoping that some chance deflection in the air flow over the control surfaces would give them power.

Freddie caught a glimpse of Moore in mid-air and saw a flutter of white as he was whipped away from the falling machine by his parachute. He searched for Lindsell and saw him plunge head first from his cockpit. Freddie knew that height was scarce ; but he could not begin to take measures for his own safety until he knew that Lindsell was all right and he watched him fall until his parachute streamed out of the pack. It was his own signal ! He tore the pin from his Sutton harness and thrust himself up against the centrifugal loads with all the strength of his thighs and then leaped outwards and forwards into space.

Even as he jumped he saw a shed roof, horribly close, swing past his eyes in a wildly whirling blurr. He was falling. He jerked at the parachute rip cord. The whirling ground rushed up at him.

His thought rate speeded up as if in a nightmare and the instantaneous impression came upon him that the whole thing had happened before. Yes. It had all happened before. He seemed to remember every detail of the fall ; the sensation of sinking through the air with the earth whirling below him was suddenly familiar. And as that thought pierced his consciousness there came with it the dreadful realisation that he had jumped too late to give his parachute time to open.

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Broadsell had stood on the tarmac watching the Stayne as Freddie climbed it. The gaps between the cumulus clouds were sufficiently big to allow him to follow almost every detail of the course of events. He saw Freddie do his figure of eights. He saw the left-hand spin and the extrication. He saw the subsequent climb to regain height and he saw the right-hand spin and its development into a fast and obviously uncontrollable flat spin.

For a moment he watched the spin transfixed. His hand went to his right tunic pocket which was bulged out by a small cardboard box containing a china duck. Then he broke into action.

‘Start up the ambulance, Flight Sergeant,’ he shouted.

He looked down to see that his orders were being obeyed. When he looked back he saw a parachute open like a puff of white smoke against the blue sky. He stared intently. The machine went down behind a cumulus cloud which blocked his view. But already he could estimate roughly where the machine must fall, close to ‘B’ Flight shed. He ran over to the station fire-engine and jumped on it, directing the driver to go along the tarmac.

‘Lucky Mr. Daye jumped, sir,’ said the driver as he changed into top.

‘He’s jumped all right, has he?’ said Broadsell with relief.

‘Yes. I’ve seen the parachutes open,’ answered the driver.

‘Thank heaven,’ answered Broadsell, and again his hand went to his right tunic pocket and the small cardboard box containing the china duck.

It was one of the most spectacular crashes ever seen at the station. The bomber hit the ground still spinning with a sound like a salvo of big guns. Black smoke shot 800 feet in the air and flames roared out. The machine had actually touched the water tower as it fell and the wreckage lay at the foot of the tower, the tail close to the steel lattice-work, blazing with such fury that it was impossible to approach it. The fire-engine stood by, but only to be ready to prevent the flames spreading to ‘B’ Flight shed. It was impossible to quell the flames.

Broadsell spoke to the fire-engine driver.

‘Where did Mr. Daye come down?’

‘I didn’t follow them after we started, sir.’

Wallasley came running up.

‘Only two men jumped,’ he gasped.

‘Only two,’ echoed Broadsell with a sudden dreadful feeling of guilt.

‘Yes, only two. There’s somebody in there.’ Wallasley indicated the flaming wreckage. ‘The ambulance has gone chasing one of the chaps who jumped who must have come down somewhere by Mayer’s Farm and I’ve sent a tender after the other.’

‘We shall soon know who the man was who stayed aboard then,’ said Broadsell quietly, the colour draining from his face. He was quite positive who it was.

He peered into the wreckage which could now be distinguished more clearly, for the very fierceness of the flames had made them short-lived. The broken, black charred frame of the machine could already be seen. Broadsell followed along the twisted fuselage with his eye, pausing at the places where were the two gunners’ cockpits and finally coming to the pilot’s cockpit in the extreme nose and searching it with his eyes for what he expected to see.

But there was still too much smoke about to be able to distinguish anything definite.

‘What’s that?’ said Wallasley.

‘What’s what?’

‘That noise.’

‘I didn’t hear anything. Ah, here’s the ambulance. And there’s Moore in the front seat.’

Moore came over and told them that he and Lindsell had jumped but that Freddie Daye had stayed with the machine.

‘There’s that noise again,’ said Wallasley.

‘Better get some water over the wreckage to cool it down so that we can get in and find Freddie,’ said Broadsell.

But Wallasley was looking up in the air and excitedly

pointing. Broadsell followed his indication and saw at the top of the water tower, peering over the edge of the tank, a face. A hand was waved and a voice called out :

‘Hi ! Get a ladder ! What the hell are you doing ? Hurry up and get a ladder. Hi, you there !’

Broadsell was almost overcome with emotion. He gave Wallasley such a smack on the back that it almost sent him flying into the still red-hot wreckage. He gave orders to the fire squad to get Freddie down from the water tower.

‘I knew Freddie would come through,’ he cried. ‘It’s his amazing luck.’

‘It’s a real miracle this time,’ said Wallasley.

‘And that proves that mascots have got nothing whatever to do with it,’ remarked Broadsell incautiously.

‘Why ; how d’you make that out ?’

‘Oh. I mean obviously. Obviously it would be just silly to listen to all that tripe about mascots.’

‘Yes, obviously. But I don’t see that this crash has anything to do with it. Ah, they’re getting at him now. He’s obviously been having a good swim. Just like Freddie to fall in the only safe place in the whole of England.’

They got Freddie down with water running out of him in all directions.

‘How on earth did you save yourself ?’ asked Broadsell.

But Freddie was still angry about the delay in getting him down.

‘What in hell you fellows thought you were doing leaving me up there I don’t know,’ he said, deeply aggrieved.

Broadsell seized his arm and shook him, beaming at him. ‘How did you save yourself ?’ he repeated.

‘I didn’t do anything. I jumped too late and happened to land in the tank. It was really rather mysterious because I had an impression at the last moment that it had all hap-

pened before and I wasn't a bit worried. It was most mysterious. But I do think it's damnable the way you fellows left me up there for hours.'

For a brief moment Broadsell thought of raising the subject of mascots and of enjoying the triumph of reason over superstition; but something prevented him.

'I suppose,' said Wallasley to Freddie, with a good-humoured grin and a quick look at Broadsell, 'it was all the result of one of your mascots.'

'Rather! I never go up without one. If I ever did I know I should be for it. But honestly I think you chaps might have used a little common sense about getting me down sooner.'

Broadsell put his hand on the right pocket of his tunic, but said nothing. He felt a little undecided about his future course of action.

That evening Broadsell was almost unnaturally polite to Freddie. Nevertheless he spent a restless night. And the next morning he still felt undecided and uncomfortable. It was not until he got down to 'A' Flight shed that he decided what to do.

He manœuvred so that he and Freddie Daye were alone in the Flight office.

'By the way,' he said, with as casual an intonation as possible, 'when I looked through the crash afterwards, I found this among the wreckage,' and he produced a small cardboard box.

Freddie took it, opened it and examined the china duck inside.

'What is it?' asked Broadsell innocently.

Freddie took out the china duck.

'It's my mascot,' he said.

With a tremendous effort Broadsell removed every possible trace of irony and sarcasm from his voice and, in perfectly level tones, as if addressing an invalid said :

‘ That is really wonderful. I suppose that is what brought you your uncanny piece of luck yesterday : ’

It went against the grain, this pretence ; but one could not be too blunt with someone who had been through Freddie’s experience. One had to humour them, rather as one humours a madman.

Freddie stared at the box and at the duck.

‘ I’m not sure,’ he answered slowly, looking rather straight at Broadsell. ‘ I’ve had a mysterious feeling that it was the teddy bear I had in my pocket. I took him up for safety—as a sort of spare. And I somehow think he was responsible for my safety . . . though it certainly is *marvellous* that that box should have come through the fire without even being scorched.’

RUDYARD KIPLING.

BY HERBERT PALMER.

THE death of Rudyard Kipling happened strangely—only a few days before the fateful hour that saw the passing of a beloved English king. He himself was more than a Kipling, for he had been a little king, a kingling, in his day the adored voice of the Empire and the English mind—a bugle and a symbol.

I first made acquaintance with his writings in 1898, a few months after I had left school; and during the three years which followed I read him hungrily. I was told that he was the greatest living (or 'modern') creative writer, and though I was a little hypercritical as regards the truth of that, I generally enjoyed him immensely—though in varying degrees of censure and approval.

He was of no very obscure or ordinary birth, for he is closely related to Stanley Baldwin and the children of Burne-Jones, the painter; and was, moreover, of sound Nonconformist stock, the grandson of Wesleyan Methodist ministers—on both the mother's and father's side. Manifestly his work would be full of Puritan and Nonconformist elements (which, of course, it was), a peculiarity which has not been sufficiently dwelt on by recent critics. But I remember that the Wesleyan Methodists did not quite accept him. They were shocked by his irreverence and public-house violence; for he used livid raw-hide words where all other Victorian writers used dashes (indeed, he was the fathering pioneer of modern outspokenness, though translated into more lurid terms by D. H. Lawrence and

his kin) and was much too free with the name of the Deity, whom his soldier heroes generally called 'Gawd.' There was something, too, about his Christianity which didn't always quite come off. His ethics were too pagan, particularly Roman-pagan. It is true that a great many of our prominent Nonconformists were imperialists, but Rudyard Kipling's imperialism was sometimes just a little too downright and committal for them. But they were proud of him in a sort of backstairs way, and forgave him when he wrote the hymn 'Recessional.' He had 'some of the right stuff in him,' at any rate; and even if he was a black sheep, he had at least half a hoof in the heavenly fold. And, moreover, the modern British were the God-baptised successors of the imperialistic pagan Romans.

His influence on me was not entirely beneficiary. He made me despise myself as a physical and social weakling, and I am sure I was not alone. Looking back, I know now that his glorification of physical prowess and endurance often weakened his stature as a creative writer. Many of his heroes were too beefy, too often men of great physical activity rather than spiritual activity; while he exalted the Machine at the expense of his own romanticism. But the *Spectator* (I feel almost sure it was the *Spectator*) called him 'The Great Interpreter,' and the definition was not entirely ill-fitting. He interpreted India and the British Army; and he voiced the feelings of all sorts of energetic common men—emigrants and Indian Civil-servants and sailors and explorers and smugglers. His India was scarcely the India of Edward Thompson, for we were not so self-critical in those days, but it was nevertheless one side of the medal. And he adored adventurers and people who roved, so long as they were creatures of 'Progress' and were governed by Law. Yes, that was his great exaction and limitation.

He was hag-ridden by the Law, by the rules of the game, the Roman code (if he was quite right, why did the Christians rise up and bruise it?), the public-school spirit (it seemed that you could be quite white and preserve the public-school spirit even when you were doing wrong); and some of us, quite good and honourable children of the realm, but nursing potentialities for rebellion against humbug and hypocrisy, felt that he was unduly autocratic and severe. But that was certainly the Nonconformist in him, the methodist preacher half-astray and in profane pulpits.

But some little time after he published his school story *Stalky and Co.* there was a definite reaction against him. Some avenging wit defined the book as a cad's book. The malicious fellow said that it was 'about cads, by a cad, and for cads'; and the definition whirled abroad and gathered force and size like a rolling snowball. His attitude to Ireland and the Irish certainly savoured of caddishness, and he deserved all the trouncings he got in reply from that quarter (though he was really quite the opposite of a cad). But his vices were rather too strongly emphasised. Then people enlarged their judgments against him as a Jingo Imperialist, and even slated him (oh perverse and hypocritical public!) for giving expression to their own feelings. After that nearly all the poets deserted him, the 'Georgians' in particular being very 'down' on him, and 'kiplingese' became a label for the noisiest and slickest stuff a verse-writer with a talent for jingles might be guilty of. As a matter of fact he was a better poet than many of his detractors; and he could strike their own note when he wanted to do so (take for instance the Georgian *cum* Celtic-Twilight lyric,¹ 'The way through the woods'). There is something very memorable about his *best* poems; they cling to the mind,

¹ Though rather more 'Georgian' than Celtic.

they have music, energy, sonority, and are sometimes touched with magic and beauty. His *Barrack Room Ballads* were the sensation of the year, and tatters of their long-ago stupendous appeal still adhere :

Kabul town's by Kabul river—

Blow the bugle, draw the sword—

There I lef' my mate for ever,

Wet an' drippin' by the ford.

Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,

Ford o' Kabul river in the dark !

*There's the river up and brimmin', an' there's 'arf a squadron
swimmin'*

'Cross the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

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Kabul town 'll go to hell—

Blow the bugle, draw the sword—

For I see him 'live an' well—

'Im the best beside the ford.

Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,

Ford o' Kabul river in the dark !

*Gawd 'elp 'em if they blunder, for their boots 'll pull 'em
under,*

By the ford o' Kabul river in the dark.

The whole book is crowded with such effective repetitions of words and phrases, a device recently resorted to by that eccentric poet, T. S. Eliot, who must have more than a nodding acquaintance with the Kipling poems.

The label 'kiplingese' is something of a misnomer, for Kipling had few mannerisms outside his particular use of repetition, and not an intensely individual style—at any rate not in the same way as Swinburne and the early Yeats, and perhaps G. K. Chesterton and Humbert Wolfe, have individual styles. He is not quite the first poet who wrote 'kiplingese,' and the crime of falling into that particular

gait does not necessarily imply any acquaintance with Kipling. A poet who soaks himself in the old Border Ballad, and then reads Macaulay's 'lays,' imposing on the combination many music-hall jingles and Moody and Sankey hymns, will, of course, unless his individuality is very pronounced, write poems in the Kipling manner—though rarely with such striking art; for, at his best, Kipling the verse-writer is a formidable artist:

*Thus said the Lord in the Vault above the Cherubim,
Calling to the Angels and the Souls in their degree :
 ' Lo ! Earth has passed away
 On the smoke of Judgment Day.
That our word may be established shall We gather up the sea ? '*

*Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :
' Plague upon the hurricane that made us furl and flee !
 But the war is done between us,
 In the deep the Lord hath seen us—
Our bones we'll leave the barracout' and God may sink the sea ! '*

*Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :
Plucking at their harps, and they plucked unhandily :
 ' Our thumbs are rough and tarred,
 And the tune is something hard—
May we lift a Deepsea Chantey such as seamen use at sea ? '*

Nearly the whole of 'The Last Chantey' is rich with fine phrases and unusual words—barracout', picaroon, fulmar, frapp'd, bull-mouth'd breakers, windless glassy floor—for how specialising the man could be, even 'high-brow' and popular at the same moment and in the same breath ! His knowledge was enormous ; he was a walking encyclopædia, and yet he could bring himself down to the humblest reader. You may hate poetry or you may love it, but either way, whatever plank of extremity you stand on, you

are bound to be a little inflamed by some of his melodies, particularly by 'Danny Deeever,' that wild, macabre, and yet intensely modern ballad—François Villon and the Medieval Scotch Border and the Public School and the British Army and Moody and Sankey rolled into a single molten bar of grim gold. One cannot do justice to it in fragments, though even a fragment is hypnotic :

*They are hangin' Danny Deeever, they are marchin' of 'im round,
They 'ave 'altered Danny Deeever by 'is coffin on the ground ;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deeever in the mornin' !*

Manifestly Kipling valued 'Danny Deeever' very highly, for he put it first of his *Barrack Room Ballads* ; but the English mind tends to avoid the grim and terrible (even cautiously rejecting what excites or pleases it) and so the poem has never been estimated at its true literary worth. Nor has Kipling ever been sufficiently estimated as a Teutonic 'scop' or 'skald,' though he was the direct spiritual descendant of those old minstrels who sailed with the Northern sea-rovers and stirred the heart to tears and frenzy. The note is sometimes unmistakable, though rarely does he strike it with such directness as in 'The Harp Song of the Dane Woman' :

*What is a woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth-fire and the home-acre,
To go with the old grey Widow-maker ?*

A superb stanza ! and it is a pity that none of the others in the poem are quite as good ; for too often, much too often, Kipling the verse-writer was occupied with what he wanted to say rather than the manner of saying it, though no man was ever clearer in his mind as to the importance of form—beauty and power arrived at by some strange or super-perfect arrangement of words and syllables. A jingle,

and even a very simple one, may be lifted into the atmosphere of poetry,—so that the song of the disconsolate Roman legionary becomes rather more than a mere commonplace rime :

*And I've tramped Britain, and I've tramped Gaul,
And the Pontic shore where the snow-flakes fall
As white as the neck of Lalage—
(As cold as the heart of Lalage !)
And I've lost Britain, and I've lost Gaul,
And I've lost Rome, and worst of all,
I've lost Lalage !*

Like Goldsmith, whatever Kipling touched he adorned. He was a good poet in two or three different manners (that is when he really chose to be good), a great short-story writer, an impressive recorder of Nature in her simplest and most visible aspects, and an arresting novelist. Perhaps the Future will value him highest for his short stories ; for things like ' The Brushwood Boy ' seem to have the aureole of immortality upon them. Moreover, he could be exceedingly strange (even supernatural) and at the same time entirely convincing. And what he put to paper he rewrote and rewrote, hammering his sentences and paragraphs into firm shapes of colour and form. He is probably the greatest short-story writer of the English language, our Maupassant, though greater than Maupassant, who is limited by his depressing and uncompromising realism. He was as painstaking as he was prolific—at any rate in his prose, for he left his slickness to his verse.

Of recent years he has been a little neglected. Probably this has been due more to his emotionalism than to the rabid Imperialist thread which so frequently runs through his work. Emotionalism to-day is not looked upon with favour when it appears on the printed page ; and it is too

often misnamed 'sentimentalism' when it is simple and homely. Even though it be disciplined and restrained (and Kipling's emotional prose is always that) the modernist wants to reject it.

When Rikki got to the house, Teddy and Teddy's mother (she looked very white still, for she had been fainting) and Teddy's father came out and almost cried over him; and that night he ate all that was given him till he could eat no more, and went to bed on Teddy's shoulder, where Teddy's mother saw him when she came to look late at night.

'He saved our lives and Teddy's life,' she said to her husband. 'Just think, he saved all our lives.'

Rikki-tikki woke up with a jump, for all the mongooses are light sleepers.

'Oh, it's you,' said he. 'What are you bothering for? All the cobras are dead; and if they weren't, I'm here.'

That passage may not sound very striking taken away from its context, but reading the story from beginning to end (it is 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi' of *The Jungle Book*) it is difficult to refrain from tears when you come to it.

The true estimation of Kipling has, perhaps, not yet begun. When the chaff is swept away from the wheat, what a bulky body of good work will still remain to us! Even some of the apparently superficial (and one has continually to emphasise that Kipling wrote much that is apparently very superficial) is curiously touched with magic; for Kipling had a diamond in one of his finger-nails, which sometimes changed garbage and dust into things of glittering wonder. He was no great teacher, no delver into the abyss, no poet of profundities; but he made a world, indeed many worlds; and as a creator he surely walks in the company of the Great, and to-day adorns the tapestries of the Celestial City with images of purple and gold.

TWO RECOLLECTIONS.

BY RODNEY GALLOP.

I. THE LETTER.

THE episode of the letter is the most vivid recollection, as it was the most intense and poignant experience, of my early childhood. It happened about two months after my fifth birthday, at Sheringham where we were spending the summer. My mornings were taken up with lessons, but all my afternoons were spent on the cliffs south of the town with Tilly, my nursemaid. With the more critical judgment born of later experience I recall Tilly as a pleasant young woman in the middle twenties with a schoolgirl giggle and a horizon neither wider nor narrower than her kind. The five-year-old child saw in her a good companion who could always descend without effort to his own level, and whom strangely enough it was no satisfaction to disobey. Tilly held the key to a world of legend peopled with the mysterious and almost epic figures of her own family: Mother, sister Mary who worked in a Post Office, Uncle Fred, and others who at that time loomed large in my imagination but whom I have since forgotten.

It was very pleasant on the cliffs. I think it must have been a fine summer, for in retrospect I see them bathed in sunshine, with white sails on the blue sea, and white seagulls trailing their shadows over the green turf. There was always a fresh breeze. I used to play about, never far from Tilly, my mind calm and untroubled, yet receptive and somehow expectant, although I could not have told of what.

On the particular day that I have in mind Tilly had been reading a letter. When she reached the end she tore it into little pieces and scattered them on the grass. For a moment they lay still; then the wind lifted them and carried them down the green hillside, some farther than others, from tuft to tuft of the short, crisp grass. Idly I watched them until the farthest were out of sight, and it was time to go home to tea.

That night, when I had been put to bed and the light had gone out, there reappeared before my eyes the picture of those torn fragments of paper fluttering before the wind. Where would they be now, I wondered. If, to-morrow, I returned to the cliff and sought to find them, to piece together again the letter of which they were the dispersed fragments, would I be able to do so? Gradually there began to form in my mind a thought which was terrible for the reason that no such idea had ever occurred to me before. Never, I told myself, never would I be able to retrieve those white scraps of paper, still less piece together the letter which they had composed. To me, hitherto, time had been a thing finite and measurable. But here was something beyond the bounds of measurement. I and all that was about me could pass away and be destroyed before the casual, heedless act of a sunny afternoon could be revoked.

It made no difference that I had no interest in the letter itself, that there was no conceivable reason why I should ever wish to retrieve its scattered fragments. It had become a symbol of the irrevocability of the past, and the infinity, the hollow, comfortless infinity, of the future. Never in later life have I known again the utter, unredeemed misery of that moment, when for the first time I became aware of the limiting conditions of human existence and, with the intensity of which only a child is capable, realised their full

implications. Moreover, I was too young in experience to know that in a short while I should be asleep, that the next morning would dawn bright and carefree, and that the weight of my newly discovered knowledge would not always oppress me so intolerably as now.

The easy tears of childhood ran down on to my pillow. I must have called out or sobbed aloud, for my mother came running to comfort me. Between my sobs I told her about the letter. She did not understand. How could she? The letter, she told me, was a worthless thing to which after that night I should never give another thought. But I would not be comforted. So she stayed with me and ran her fingers soothingly through my hair until I fell asleep.

The next morning I thought no more about Tilly's letter. Nevertheless, from that day onwards there lay deep down in my mind, at the very springs of thought, the knowledge that nothing, not even the remotest future, was more inaccessible than the recent past, and that in common with all mankind I could never escape from the horror of infinity, whether of existence or oblivion.

II. THE WAGTAIL'S NEST.

It began with a casual allusion at a cocktail party.

'Tell me about the wagtail's nest you mentioned,' I said. 'I've a special reason for asking.'

'I've always thought it one of my best stories,' he answered. 'There are so many possible explanations, but so far as I know the mystery was never cleared up. It happened one summer term, nearly fifteen years ago. As you probably know, Cleveden's was a fine school, but the Head had one or two bees in his bonnet, and bird's-nesting was one of them. A good many of us were keen on birds and of course there were plenty of nests in the grounds, but it was

a strict rule that we had to report any we found, and taking a single egg was just as heinous an offence as smoking.

‘Well, I had never so much as heard of the wretched wagtail’s nest until the row started, and then of course we heard of nothing else. The first I knew of it was one night when we had all gone to bed. Dallas, the Captain of our dormitory, came in, turned the light on and looking very severe asked if any of us had robbed the wagtail’s nest down at the swimming-baths. Apparently, a water-wagtail had nested in a disused cubicle full of old water-polo gear. Dallas, who rather fancied himself as a naturalist, had found the nest and reported it to one of the masters, and together they had visited it day by day. Now, someone had robbed the nest, and adding insult to injury had substituted sparrows’ eggs for the wagtail’s. Dallas flourished them in our faces. Whoever had done it must own up, he said, or there was going to be the dickens of a row. We all said it wasn’t us, and Dallas went out looking furious.

‘Next morning at breakfast we compared notes. All the other dormitories had also been questioned the night before, but no one had owned up, and no one knew who had done it. It gave quite a pleasurable thrill to what up to that point had been a dull term, but none of us was prepared for what followed. Nothing more was said that morning. Then at lunch, just before grace, the Head announced that instead of going out into the playing fields we were all to meet in Big School in half an hour.

“‘It rests with you,” he said, “or rather with one of you, whether you are kept there a short time or a long.”

‘Well, if you’ll believe me, for the whole of that long summer afternoon we stayed in Big School, until it was time for supper. We missed our cricket, we missed our

tea, we even missed our evening form-work. The Head began with a pi-jaw, and the way he talked about that miserable wagtail's nest you'd have thought we'd broken every one of the Ten Commandments. It was bad enough the way he exaggerated the enormity of the offence, but it was worse when he made it out to be a breach of trust. After all the boy who had done it (if any boy *had* done it, which was by no means certain) had probably realised that he was taking a sporting risk of being found out and punished. I don't suppose he thought his honour came into it at all. Now, to make matters worse, the Head, having said that the offender's honour was forfeit, called upon him *on that very honour* to stand up and publicly confess his crime. The whole school was to be kept in until he did so.

'I won't say there weren't many of us who would have had the moral courage to own up, however much we might resent the means employed to extort a confession. The fact remains that no one stirred. There were long periods of awkward silence, between which the Head, growing more and more flustered, alternately fulminated and appealed. Finally, though no one had spoken, he had to let us go. I needn't tell you how much face he lost over the affair. Opinion in the school was by no means unanimous in condemning the boy who didn't own up. After all, you expect the police to catch a criminal, not the criminal to confess. Some of us felt that it must have needed almost as much pluck for the offender to keep his secret through that ordeal as to own up. To this day I've never stopped wondering who did it.'

'Now I'll tell you why I was interested,' I said. 'You see it was I who changed the wagtail's eggs.'

'But you weren't at Cleveden's,' he objected.

'No, but I was at Fisher's, a private tutor's only a mile

away. I suppose that in his righteous indignation your Head forgot that he had given us the run of your swimming-bath in the early afternoons when you were at cricket.

‘I changed the eggs,’ I continued, ‘but of course I never knew your rule against bird’s-nesting, still less about the row. It was quite simple. I found the nest and wanted the eggs for my collection. I wouldn’t have dreamed of taking them all and making the birds desert, but I happened to have found a clutch of house-sparrow’s eggs with very similar markings, so I wrapped them in cotton-wool and put them still warm in the nest in the place of those I took. When I found them gone a day or two later and the nest deserted I was very puzzled and felt rather bad about it.’

‘What an extraordinary coincidence,’ he said. ‘I don’t know whether you’ve spoilt my story or improved it by solving the mystery.’

‘Curiously enough,’ I continued, ‘something very similar happened at my own school about a year before. It’s a school in which the houses and form-rooms are scattered about a small town. One day an insulting inscription was found scrawled across a notice on the School Board which was in a public place where any outsider could have got at it. Things followed almost the same course as at Clevedon’s, only we were docked of all half-holidays until someone should own up. No one did. The Head of the School who fancied himself as a detective claimed to have narrowed it down to three boys, all of whom strenuously denied it. I don’t know to this day if one of them had really done it or not. Eventually we had our half-holidays restored to us, but the harm was done, and we all felt that the Head had not played the game in making it a question of honour. Looking back after all these years I think I see why. In his inarticulate way a schoolboy regards his honour as a

very precious and sacred thing. But he doesn't consider it pledged except freely and willingly. So he resents and resists any attempt by the masters to exploit it and make an unfair use of it. And isn't he perfectly right ?'

Mexico.

THE WISE ULYSSES.

*What song was that of old the Syrens sang,
The song the wise Ulysses would not hear
And grasped his helm-oar steady as a spear
Watching his bellying wind-sheet lest it hang ?
He who had failed not when Troy's fury rang
Hewing men's harness fast and fell and sheer ;
He who the roaring of Charybdis near
Had harkening dared it though the sucked keel swang !*

*There is more madness in a charmed cup
Than in all battles since old Time was born ;
Two red lips parted and white arms held up
Have emptied thrones and laid the earth forlorn ;
Then wise are they who shun the Syrens' cry,
—And wiser yet who follow it till they die !*

C. S. SHERRINGTON.

AFTER TEA.

BY DOROTHY WHIPPLE.

THEY had something to say to her, they told Christine. They would say it after tea.

Mr. and Mrs. Berry always fixed the time for everything. They arranged life in time-tables. Perhaps because nothing of importance happened to them, they liked to make unimportant things important. By fixing a walk, say, for three-thirty, the walk and the hour were made significant. One could look forward to three-thirty, refer frequently to three-thirty, get ready for three-thirty, announce that it was just three-thirty and with satisfaction set off. A walk, taken like that, was much more of an event than a mere exit from the garden gate as soon as a wish to walk occurred.

Mr. Berry was a Civil Servant, but if anything of importance happened to him at his office, which was unlikely, he never said so.

While Mr. Berry was at his office, Mrs. Berry stayed at home, looking after herself. Mrs. Berry was devoted to the care of herself and she expected the same devotion from Christine.

The neighbours were sorry for Christine.

'That poor girl,' they said to each other as Mrs. Berry's voice fluted from the garden all the summer long.

'Christine, I'll have my orange juice now.'

'Bring my rug, Christine, I find it rather chilly.'

'Just get my sunshade from the corner of my wardrobe, Christine. Well, if it's not there. it's somewhere else. Don't be stupid, dear.'

‘They say an only child is spoilt,’ said the neighbours to each other. ‘But this one isn’t. She can’t call her soul her own.’

Mrs. Berry arranged Christine’s life in time-table too. Two mornings a week, she sent Christine into town to do the shopping. Mrs. Berry did not care to go into town; it was too fatiguing. She did not care for people, either, and there were, unfortunately, so many of them. So she sent Christine to the shops. On the other mornings, she arranged what Christine should do to help Bertha, the maid, in the house.

In the afternoons, Christine took Mrs. Berry for her walk. Mrs. Berry leaned on Christine’s arm, and as she was a heavy woman and a great leaner, she almost sawed Christine’s forearm in two.

‘I think I’ll come round to the other side now, Mother,’ said Christine from time to time, letting the other forearm take its turn.

When mornings and afternoons were spent in this way, it seemed reasonable to Christine that she should have the evenings to herself. But in spite of a recent fierce struggle, she could not get them. She could not even get two evenings to attend the French lectures at the University.

‘They’re free,’ she said, with tears of exasperation in her eyes. ‘It’s not as if I was asking you to pay anything for me.’

‘Don’t be impertinent, dear,’ said Mrs. Berry.

She explained that cost was not the point. The maid Bertha was already out two nights a week.

‘But the lectures aren’t on the same nights as Bertha’s nights,’ protested Christine.

‘No, but if Bertha is out two nights a week and you are also out two nights a week, it makes everything very un-

settled. Besides, your father likes you to be in when he comes home.'

'I don't know why,' sighed Christine. 'It's not as if we ever did anything.'

'I don't know what's come over you,' said Mrs. Berry. 'You're getting very disagreeable.'

'Can I go to a lecture once a week then?' persisted Christine.

'I don't know,' said Mrs. Berry. 'I shall have to see what your father says.'

So Christine waited with what patience she could. She was determined to improve her French somehow. She was determined to make up the deficiencies in her education of which, at nineteen, she was uncomfortably conscious. How could she keep pace with other girls if she didn't *know* anything, she asked herself furiously.

At school, her progress had been extremely hampered by Mrs. Berry's headaches. Whenever Mrs. Berry had a headache, she kept Christine at home. When Christine returned to school, she found she had lost her place in form. This happened so often that Christine, a clever child, lost heart and gradually relinquished her attempts to keep up. It was no good trying, she felt.

But lately she had been fired with a desire to know something, to be something. Her friend Mary had gone off to London and was living a grand independent life with a flat of her own and a job of her own. When Mary wrote to ask Christine to join her, Christine tore the letter into tiny shreds so that no one should be able to piece together the preposterous, enchanting suggestion. If she could not even get permission to spend two nights a week at the French lectures, how could she hope to be allowed to go and spend her whole time in London? Mary and other girls might

go off and pursue careers in London and elsewhere, but she had to stay at home.

She did, however, pursue a career of her own in secret. She entered for competitions in the literary journals. When she went into town to do the shopping, she rushed into the Public Library to see what she could go in for next.

The assistants there were quite familiar with the sight of the one they called 'the girl with the parcels.' Christine always had so many, because Mrs. Berry did not believe in having things sent up. She believed in watching the cutting of the bacon, the weighing of the butter, and though she did not do this herself, she sent Christine to do it. And the bacon being cut and the butter being weighed, she believed in bringing them home there and then, in case the grocer, left to himself, should palm off some other bacon, some other butter.

So Christine, with parcels packed into the basket and dangling also from every finger, visited the Reading Room of the Public Library to go through the literary journals. She put down the basket and untwisted the string from her bleached fingers with relief. She collected the journals and sat down. She turned the pages with haste and excitement. Sometimes there was no mention of her, but sometimes 'Medea' had won a prize of two guineas, one guinea, or ten-and-sixpence for a set of verses, a short story or a Limerick. After such an announcement, Christine collected her parcels and hurried from the Library with flushed cheeks and shining eyes, and for days was down first in the morning to intercept the postman. For these activities must be kept secret. She didn't know exactly why ; but secret they must be kept.

'We all have our secrets,' she excused herself to herself.

Her mother, she knew, always had chocolates hidden in

a corner of a drawer. She never brought them out to hand about. Her mother had chocolates hidden in a drawer and she, Christine, had nine pounds in notes hidden among the neat rolls of her mended stockings. It was the same thing. Human beings evidently were like that.

But although she knew about her mother's chocolates, had always known, she hoped her mother did not know about the nine pounds.

Perhaps it was that, she thought with sudden apprehension, perhaps it was the secreted money they were going to tell her about after tea.

Well, even if it was, she thought, she would have to wait. Nothing would induce them to disclose before the appointed time.

This habit of holding things back, of making them portentous, seemed to her most absurd. So many things about her parents seemed absurd, petty, tyrannical now. She didn't know when or how she had become critical and rebellious, but she was now both.

'I'm not treated half so well as Bertha,' she told them. 'I've no wages and I've no time off.'

It was this last outrageous remark that made Mr. and Mrs. Berry decide to tell her what they had intended to keep to themselves for another two years or even perhaps as long as they lived, letting it out only in their wills. But now they would tell her. They would bring her to her senses. Hers might be the accepted behaviour of the modern girl, but they would not put up with it. They would end it by explaining matters. They would tell her after tea.

At tea, Christine felt inclined to giggle. The atmosphere of the drawing-room was heavy with presage. Mr. Berry, fair where he was not bald, small and solemn, sat on one side of the fire. Mrs. Berry, fair and fuzzy, solemn but not

small, sat on the other. Christine, slender, dark, glowing, and quite unlike either of them, sat between.

No one spoke. The clock ticked. The fire fell softly. When Mrs. Berry drank tea, the resultant swallow sounded very loud. It made Christine more than ever inclined to giggle. She suppressed her smiles behind a biscuit. How could they hold things back like this? Why didn't they come out with it, whatever it was? Even if it was about the money, why didn't they come out with it?

'Will you have some more tea, James?' enquired Mrs. Berry.

'Thank you, no,' said James.

'You may clear away, Christine,' said Mrs. Berry.

Bertha was out.

Christine jumped up with alacrity. She seized the three-legged cake-stand and swung with it out of the room, endangering the Madeira. She came back for the tray and bore it out. She came back to fold up the table and the cloth.

Now for it. Now she would have to tell about her competitions and she didn't want to. She didn't want to at all. She wanted to keep something for herself.

'Close the door,' said Mrs. Berry.

'Oh, must we have the door closed?' said Christine. 'It's hot in here and Bertha's out. She can't listen.'

'Close the door,' said Mrs. Berry.

Yes, it was high time they told her. One could not even have the doors as one wanted them in one's own house without question these days.

'Your father and I have something to tell you, Christine,' said Mrs. Berry when Christine was reseated. 'James, I think you'd better.'

James Berry gave a preliminary cough and pulled down

his cuffs. He collected, as it were, Christine's attention. Although that was unnecessary, because he already had it.

'I want you to prepare yourself for something of a shock, Christine,' he said.

Christine smiled. She was prepared, she thought, and it wouldn't be a shock.

'You are a sensible girl, on the whole,' conceded Mr. Berry. 'And I think you will be able to stand it. We did not intend to tell you until you were twenty-one. If then.'

Mr. Berry paused and Christine stared. This could not be about the money.

'We feel now that it would be better if you realised the exact position. You have been somewhat, shall we say, restive and undutiful lately,' said Mr. Berry. 'You have upset your mother on several occasions. I say your mother, Christine, but there I come to the crux of the matter.'

Christine stared intently. What was coming? Something important this time. Something vital.

'She is not your mother, Christine,' said Mr. Berry. 'Neither am I your father. We are not your parents and you are not our child. We took you from a Home when you were two years old. Your own parents were then dead.'

Christine sat quite still, staring at the man she had hitherto believed to be her father. The colour drained slowly from her cheeks.

'You must not take it too much to heart,' said Mr. Berry. 'Everything shall be as before as far as we are concerned. We shall continue to do in the future what we have done for you in the past. But we think a little gratitude on your part would be more seemly. We think it is best that you should know what has been done for you.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Berry.

The colour was coming back now to Christine's cheeks. It deepened to a glow. Her eyes shone. Never had they seen such a lighting up of her face. This, they thought, was gratitude. Visible, satisfactory gratitude. How wise they had been to tell her.

They waited, for she was obviously going to speak when she could master her very proper emotion.

She leaned forward and they leaned forward, too, to accept.

'So you're not my parents after all?' she asked, rather breathlessly. 'I'm not your child? I'm no relation to you at all?'

'No,' they said.

'I can't take it in,' she said. 'I can't believe it.'

'It's true,' said Mrs. Berry. 'I just walked through the Home and took the one with curly hair, didn't I, James?'

James signified gravely that this was so.

'You didn't legally adopt me? You didn't sign any papers?' asked Christine.

'No, there was nothing of that sort asked for seventeen years ago,' said Mr. Berry.

'Besides, it meant settling money and so on,' said Mrs. Berry. 'We didn't think it necessary. We always meant to treat you as our own daughter and we always have.'

'Then you are not bound to me in any way and I am not bound to you?' asked Christine.

'Only by such bonds as we have forged,' said Mr. Berry sententiously. 'The bonds of affection.'

The light persisted in Christine's face.

'I ought to have guessed,' she murmured. 'Hiding those chocolates, for instance. No *mother* would do that. And this idea that you ought always to be getting something *out* of me. I felt it, you know—subconsciously. There

were hundreds of indications. Why on earth couldn't I see ?'

The faces of Mr. and Mrs. Berry were slowly and simultaneously assuming an expression of stupefaction, but she startled it away by throwing her arms up towards the ceiling and bursting into laughter.

They were alarmed. The shock had been too much for her. They had thought she was taking it so well, but it had made her hysterical.

'Christine,' said Mr. Berry sternly. 'You must control yourself.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Berry.

Christine wiped her eyes.

'You're right. I must,' she said. 'But it's so marvellous.'

'Marvellous ?' they enquired.

'Yes, marvellous. I'm not your child. You're not my parents. You adopted me for your own pleasure. I suppose you felt out of it because you had no children. I had curly hair. I was ornamental and you thought I'd be useful later. I have been useful. Useful and wretched. You've had quite as much out of me as I've had out of you. I thank you very much for what you've done, but I shan't stay.'

It was their turn to be struck dumb. They gaped.

'No, I shan't stay,' said Christine, getting up and still wiping her eyes. 'When nature provides parents one can't do anything but put up with them. But I can. You chose me when I had no voice in the matter, but now I have and I don't choose you. You are not at all the sort of parents I should choose. By the way, do you happen to know my name ?'

They were still too dumbfounded to speak.

‘My name?’ said Christine. ‘I should like to know my name, please.’

‘Your name,’ spluttered Mr. Berry, suddenly finding his voice, ‘is Higgins.’

‘Oh,’ said Christine. ‘Well, it’s mine anyway. Now, don’t take this too much to heart. You’ll probably get someone to do for you what I have done, but I’m afraid you’ll have to pay her. I shall go to Mary for the present. I have enough money to keep me until I get a job. I made it in competitions, you know. I shall go into service if all else fails. I’ve always envied Bertha.’

She made for the door.

‘You’re not going *now*?’ cried Mrs. Berry.

‘Yes, I’m going now,’ said Christine. ‘I’ll return these clothes to you as soon as I can get others. Good-bye and thank you so very much for telling me.’

‘James!’ cried Mrs. Berry.

But what could James do?

BURTON PYNSENT.

BY LLEWELYN POWYS.

IN a letter addressed to his nephew at Cambridge the elder Pitt wrote, 'Hold fast, therefore, by the sheet-anchor of happiness, religion . . . Remember the essence of religion is a heart void of offence towards God and man; not subtle speculative opinions, but an active vital principle of faith.' It is sufficiently apparent that the judgments of the great statesman, having to do with public affairs, were far in advance of his time, and yet to-day as we read his lofty pronouncements, how wide appears the gap between his firm-founded convictions and the tentative opportunist opinions held by us. A single sentence from his last melodramatic oration in the House of Lords shows well the canyon that separates the two periods.

'His Majesty succeeded to an Empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Seventeen years ago this people was the terror of the world.'

It is not easy to reconcile such an utterance with the aims of a civilised nation. How oddly these savage words sound when juxtaposed against Lord Chatham's life-long confidence in a benignly-ordered world. 'There is no such thing as chance, this unaccountable name of nothing. All is Providence.'

Pitt's true distinction lies in the fact that he was the first Parliament-man to rouse up the spirit of democracy, that trusty watch-dog of individual freedom. His proud title of 'Great Commoner' was by no means a fanciful one. Throughout his career he displayed an almost Gladstonian

skill in exploiting the 'moral' emotionalism of the people of England, though he himself, from first to last, remained like an experienced circus master unintimidated by, if not contemptuous of, the beast he was training. Pitt was a man of contradictions : frugal and extravagant ; stoical and flamboyant. The late Lord Rosebery, whose gift as an illuminating historical commentator has never been adequately recognised, attributed many of his peculiarities to the influence of heredity : ' Thomas Pitt's (Governor Pitt) blood came all aflame from the East, and flowed like burning lava to his remotest descendants, with the exception of Chatham's children ; but even then it blazed up again in Hester Stanhope.'

Certainly the letters we have of this notable grandfather—the 'haughty huffing' interloper into the East Indian Company's monopolies—show him to have been a character, eccentric, choleric beyond all credence. It was he who acquired the celebrated Pitt diamond, conveying it to England in the heel of his son's shoe, and the violence of his 'roughling' moods is constantly revealed in his family correspondence.

'Not only your letters,' he writes to his eldest son, 'but all I have from friends, are stuffed with an account of the hellish confusion that is in my family' ; and again, 'Since last post I have had it reiterated to me that in all company you are vindicating Ormonde and Bullingbrooke, the two vilest rebels that ever were in any nation, and that you still adhere to your cursed Tory principles' ; and again, 'That your mother has been guilty of some imprudence at the Bath . . . let it be what it will, in my esteem she is no longer my wife, nor will I see her more if I can help it—' ; and again, 'If what you write of your mother be true, I think she is mad and wish she were well secured in Bedlam.'

Nothing could be in greater contrast to Pitt's own domestic felicity, calm as an ornamental lake set about with stucco statues of Fortitudo and Fidelitas—a carefully-preserved façade behind which no indiscreet impetuosity was ever suffered to intrude, but where all was subject to the decorous regulations it is the untiring aim of society to impose upon what is rude and vital.

‘Length of days be in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour. May her ways be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths be peace.’

There can be little doubt that personal ambition was the ruling passion of Pitt's life. It was stronger even than his patriotism. It was fashionable with the ruling classes of Eighteenth-Century Europe to be concerned with objective values alone. It was the shining outer surface of life that they prized, and Pitt, for all his visions, remained until his death pre-eminently the child of his epoch. Even his love-letters are written in a self-conscious, stilted tone ; the tone of a self-important man of position and substance whose only chance of learning anything about the true nature of things is from Dominie Death. His nephew, Lord Camelford, writes of him : ‘As a private man he had especially in his youth every talent to please when he thought it worth while to exert his talents, *which was always for a purpose*, for he was never natural.’

Pitt was forty-six years of age before he ventured upon his alliance with the powerful house of Grenville and wrote to the Lady Hester that he wished to pour out his heart ‘in the blue drawing room’ of Wotton ‘in effusions of the most respectful Passion, sweeten'd and endeared to me by the happy sense of Infinite and most touching obligations.’ Yet they were happy, as indeed is often the case when two connubial confederates, tacitly intent upon preserving the

other's illusions, come together ; each partner keeping watch and ward by day and by night over the vulnerable claims of the other's credulous egoism.

Burton Pynsent was bequeathed to Pitt by Sir William Pynsent, an octogenarian admirer personally unknown to him, in the year 1765. Sir William himself had come into possession of the Somerset estate through marrying the last of the Jennings family. In many ways the property suited Pitt. It was a 'rough' one and offered endless scope for the exercise of his talents in landscape gardening, a form of pastime which accorded well with the pseudo-aristocrat's uneasy distrust of everything untutored and natural. 'I intend,' he wrote, after having been at Burton for six years, 'to prolong my stay in this place : between farming, hunting, and planting now beginning, we are all, young and old, highly pleased to find our day not long enough.' Tree-planting especially appealed to him.

'Bless me,' exclaimed his Somerset gardener upon receiving instructions to crown the bleak hill of Burton Pynsent with cedars and cypresses, 'all the nurseries in the county would not furnish the hundredth part required.' 'No matter, send for them from London' ; and from London they came, by 'land carriage,' at a heavy expenditure.

The Younger Pitt was only eight years old when his father inherited his Somerset windfall, and on observing the model behaviour of the boy, 'for his father never suffered a day to pass without giving instruction of some sort to his children, and seldom without reading a chapter of the Bible with them,' Lady Holland, with a perspicacity almost prophetic, wrote in her diary, 'he is going to be a thorn in Charles's side as long as he lives' ; Charles being none other than Charles James Fox, one of the gayest and most generous-hearted champions of liberty that England has ever known.

As a boy I was once present at a picnic at Burton Pynsent. Mr. Robert Blake, who was then living at Yeabridge, had arranged the party. With some of his children I went up the stairs inside the famous monument. When scarce larger than a fortune-telling monkey in a red coat I had been daily pulled, pushed, lifted, scolded, and coaxed by my sister Nelly to the topmost attic twigs of the walnut tree in the Montacute glebe. By this experience I had acquired a good head for heights, and now finding before me so tempting an opportunity for showing off, I stepped boldly out upon the parapet, and with the utmost coolness walked round the top of the column, receiving on my reappearance a glance from my host which I have never forgotten, a glance such as might have been given to a faithless hireling for 'boxing sheep' on some windy promontory in the Falkland Islands. The Pitt family held the property until the death of Lady Chatham in 1803, when the second Lord Chatham sold it to the Pinney family, who had it in their possession for the next hundred years.

In a great measure Pitt may be said to have owed his Parliamentary triumphs to his eloquence, which, together with his aloof presence, enabled him to dominate the House of Commons. He had a strong theatrical sense and was an accomplished master in all the arts by which men's feelings can be swayed. Lord Camelford wrote 'he had appropriated the dramatic way of doing things, till it had become a second nature to him.' Garrick is said to have remarked that if Pitt had chosen the stage of Drury Lane instead of that of St. Stephen's he would have excelled beyond all competition. 'It should be remembered,' comments Lord Rosebery, 'that in one sense he was always acting in the common business of life; when he chipped an egg, or talked to his gardener, or mounted his horse, he was acting.'

Sir Robert Walpole, the old Norfolk squire, had been quick to recognise his talents in the House. 'We must muzzle that terrible cornet of horse,' he had said, and on account of an insubordinate speech deprived the young officer of his commission. Bolingbroke understood in a flash the pragmatic value of Pitt's idealism and with philosophic cynicism dubbed him 'sublimity Pitt.' One contemporary describes his oratory thus: 'He diverted into a thousand digressions, often reverted back to the same ground and seemed sometimes like the lion to lash himself with his own tail to rouse his courage.' And yet, heroical-pompous though he was, and never tired of contemplating himself in the various brave parts he was called upon to play, he is yet deserving of the honour that posterity has bestowed on his name. It is true he was a popinjay before a mirror, but it was a popinjay with a solid gizzard of virtue such as only an eagle could possess.

Below his class consciousness, histrionic insincerities, and starched formalities, his political principles stood sound and humane. In him we may trace the first stirring towards those radical reforms that were to signalise the nineteenth century, and it is difficult to imagine a time when liberals of the older sort will not rally to his rhetoric: 'I rejoice that America has resisted; three millions of people, so dead to all feelings of liberty as voluntarily to consent to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest.'

Nor are any of us who love Somerset, this summer land of our allegiance, likely to forget Pitt's devotion to the county which even the well-poised periods of his decorous letters are not able to hide. His passion for embellishing rural nature may partly account for it, but when this has been allowed for, there yet remains a residue of authentic

appreciation. As early as 1765 he wrote to Lord Temple : ' Thus you see, my dear Lord, how the passion of dirty acres grows upon a West Saxon of yesterday, and that I meditate laying rapacious hands on a considerable part of the County of Somerset. . . . I advance apace in bricks and mortar : but the monumental column ¹ must wait the return of spring to lift its head upon a weather-beaten promontory.'

And again to Anne, his favourite sister, he writes : ' I still continue lame, but have left off one crutch, which is no small advance ; tho' with only one wing my flights, you will imagine, are as yet very short : the County of Somersetshire is beautiful and tempts much to extend them.'

¹.At the foot of the monument Pitt had these words carved : *Hoc saltem fungar inani munere.*

UNWRITTEN VERSE.

*A world of wonder slumbers in my soul :
 All things conspire to music—evening skies,
 Moonlight's mild splendour, virginal surprise
 Of light reborn, trees' heady tumult, scroll
 Of lace-runed water, and the downland's roll,
 All these and more, but, most of all, the eyes
 Of fellowship and the infinite joy that flies,
 Wide-winged, abroad when Love is Life's one goal.
 Yet for a space this music, so intense
 It sweeps my being like Eternity,
 Is fallen to silence, and I walk in flame,
 A figure without voice : Time's recompense,
 An unsought spring, will break afresh in me—
 Till then, dream-treasure, limitless, I claim.*

GORELL.

THE EUROPE-BIRD.

BY VIOLET CAMPBELL.

WE came to the edge of the forest, my half-brother and I, as the sun's last arrows were spent. The sky, as soon as we could see it through the trees, shone as green as a forest pool, and the blanket of the night was coming up quickly to cover it. We moved quickly, too, my half-brother and I, from trunk to trunk, without noise, as is our custom ; for we were in haste to be at the place he had told me of, before darkness came.

He is a dreamer, this man, he is smaller even than myself, yet his dreams are so large the world cannot hold them. Sometimes they are of how he will climb to the tops of the trees and, pulling down the clouds, make cloth of them to sell to the Bantus : or how he will breed gold from the blood of a black snake : but this day he was taking me to a place where lives a hart with three heads, whose three mouths deliver the Past, the Present and the Future.

It is the habit of my half-brother to talk incessantly of the future of our race. ' We, who are feared most of all the forest-people,' he cries excitedly, ' because of our smallness, and strength, and cunning, and relentless revenge : because, too, we cannot be seen : shall we suffer for ever the lordship of the Bantu ? Shall we not, rather, gather ourselves together, and braving for once the daylight, vanquish at last the whole earth, even to the Mountains of the Moon ? Look up, now, at the sky : why are we afraid of it ? It is quiet and grey and cannot harm us. Only

in the West lingers yet a little fire of our enemy. If we could conquer this—that is, our fear of it—we could capture also the golden beasts and birds that shall glorify the future of our race——’

Even as he spoke, out of the West without sound a very large bird came flying.

My half-brother and I had never seen anything like it. We were stupefied. We stood quite still, staring.

Four wings this thing had, yet used them not : on each side they stuck out stiffly : black against the last of the daylight came this monstrous fly or bird. It swept down through the empty sky, lower and lower, nearing the earth. Then for a moment it was hidden by trees, and when we saw it again it was sitting quietly on the ground, on its two feet and its tail.

It did not stir again after that : it did not even fold its wings : it sat still, looking at us.

Like a heavy spear terror fell upon us. We were quite on the edge of the clearing, we were without shelter : in my terrible trembling at this unknown thing my legs would not even turn to run back among the trees : but I heard my half-brother say a low quick word, and I knew he was feeling for the pottery bottle at his neck and would dip in its poison an arrow wherewith to slay the bird. But just as his arrow was fitted to his little bow, a black hole came all at once in the creature’s side, and from this was born suddenly two very big men. Their voice came to us, like a lion’s cough, across the open : and in the next moment the darkness came down over the sky and swallowed them up.

At once we were running as fast as we could back to our home in the forest. At the cross-paths my uncle passed us ; I put out my hand on his arm and stopped him. We

stood there in the darkness without speaking, I dared not ask him if he had seen it. He pulled some deep breaths into his body, for he is an old man to be running. 'The Europe-bird !' he said : and ran on.

After a little while we began to understand why he was going in that direction, and without pause. My half-brother said, as for him, he must go to his wife ; so we parted. I sat down and drew out some dried meat from my belt and ate that, and drank some fresh water from a creeper's stem : then I slung my quiver again, and started the long run in the footsteps of my uncle.

The stars were in the sky, yet the leaves of the trees swallowed up their light : but I knew the path through the forest as a foal knows its dam. My thoughts were troubled and fearful : the past of my life trotted before me as I went. I saw the little clearings where we have lived so happily, well sheltered from the sun's rays, hunting continually, till all the small game has been eaten or driven away . . . I saw the little bands of ourselves, when we wanted sweet food, creeping by darkness into the banana-plantations, or into the maize-fields, taking off as much as we could carry, and leaving behind a present of game . . . I saw the birth of my eldest child, who, when he was born, caused the moon the whole night to remain in a strange one-sided shape, a thing known only once before in the lifetime of the oldest. I saw myself naming him : The-boy-who-cut-a-slice-off-the-moon . . . The past still trotted before me, back and back . . . I saw my first meeting with my wife on a moonlight night in a clearing of the forest . . . The music of the drum and the bow-string lessens and dies. The full light of the moon flows out. I take my stand, decorated with all I have, and freshly painted, in a row with the rest of the warriors of my age-class. Our teeth

chatter incessantly, our hearts tremble with fear and anguish, for opposite us stand the maidens who are to select us. They cross the glade and they look us up and down and they walk round us, mocking and laughing : yet we must not move so much as an eyelash. A maiden no taller than a gazelle chooses me. At last all but three are chosen : the drums beat again, the dance continues with fury. Two years it takes me to collect the arrow-heads and knives demanded by her father : then comes the joyous morning : the maid, flying from her couch in the first hour of dawn, hides in the copses, but is careful, the dove, to choose a retreat that is easily discovered . . . Aye-eee, that was a night of memories, as I ran through the forest, fearing what the dawn might bring. And at last I came to the place whither I had followed my uncle.

I smelt it first—the stinging-sweet smell of grasses and stems trodden flat by many feet. I peered through the bushes—a smooth and wide floor spread there, closely hidden by the thicket and the low huge roof of trees : and in this dark and secret place of the magician, the men of my tribe were dancing the devil-dance. In silence, and with the most hideous attitudes and gestures imaginable, they were imitating the devil, so that (if he had come to the neighbourhood) he would run away in shame and confusion : after that they broke into evil cries, to frighten him still further : they gashed terribly their arms and thighs, scattering abroad the bright drops of the blood : and at last they licked the burning stick in the frenzy of their dancing. It hissed in the air, the wet of their mouths on the red-hot wand : the cries of pain were lost in the drumming of heels and the animal-calls of the dancers. The sounds spun around in a circle under the heavy boughs, bearing the smell of the blood and sweat and the stain of the bleeding creepers.

Within the door of his cave of boughs the medicine-man sat. The dancers, one by one, exhausted, fell at his feet for a charm. I, too, in my turn, trembling, approached. Into a small thrown-off gazelle's horn the medicine-man put my medicine, sealing the opening with bees' wax. In the top of the horn he made a little hole : through this a deer's sinew was run, to hang it round my neck. I gave him a hunting-knife for this powerful charm. It was to prevent the Europe-bird from harming me next day.

Then I ran the long journey back to the sleeping-place of my family . . . My wife has given me five children, I am pleased with her. First two and then two and then one. You can easily say if she had been quite of the best merit the last would have been two also : but alas, that is not how life runs. I do not know, when my wife dies, whether I shall take one of my daughters in her place. I must consult my wife about this . . .

Hey, hey, very weary I was when I came to the bower : I crept in without sound, clasping the gazelle's horn, for I felt the eyes of the bird were still watching me . . . Overhead the trees dripped, the drops falling from leaf to leaf till at last they reached the earth. This is the sound that sends to sleep ; but even yet I could not sleep ; I looked through the darkness around me, shivering. When at last daylight broke through the tree-tops the monkeys woke up and began to jump from bough to bough. The songs of the birds were so high up in the trees that they were not heard for the monkeys' cries. I rose quickly : unwished by me, a sight was still in my stomach : and as though against my will, I glided through the ferns and rotting stumps and the coloured fungus and mosses on the ground, towards the remembered place of my dread.

It was at the cross-paths in the forest that I found my

half-brother walking beside me, without warning, as is our habit. He looked at me and I saw we were going to the same place. Yes, in spite of our fear. I said nothing. But I saw he had not got any gazelle's horn.

Very quickly the sun lifted itself and little by little we came out of the forest. Aye-ee, that was hard to come out of the darkness and feel our enemy the light hitting our eyelids ! We came a little way, then we failed and ran back again. And steadily the sun was growing taller. At last we had reached the fringe of the trees where we had halted the evening before ; and there the bird was, in the open. Only now from its body and its wings there flowed a deep shadow : and sitting and lying in this shadow I saw suddenly a few of my people. Yes, there they felt safe, as if hidden again in the shade of their beloved forest. And seeing them my fear a little melted. I looked at them with a terrible desire to approach the creature also ! And all the time the two white men were walking about and talking in our tongue and holding out gifts to tempt us into the open. Ow-ee, that was fearful, the hate of the daylight fighting with the deep hunger-longing to see and touch this strange thing.

My half-brother had spoken with friends during the night. 'It is well known of the Europe-bird,' he cried quickly, 'that he carries men in his stomach : but those that enter there have no rest for evermore, with their longing to fly through the sky and behold once again the magical countries. So with this fever of their longing they are soon consumed : even to look upon the bird gives men a malady and they die soon after.'

It was the first time I had seen my half-brother in full daylight. There he stood. His nostrils were so broad that there was the width of a palm between them. His face

resembled a frog's. Into the hole pierced in his lower lip he had stuck a porcupine quill, two grey feathers and a red flower. This disgusted me. Suddenly I felt anger for my half-brother who had given me back my fear. I felt the skin on my spine ripple up and I said to him swiftly : ' May the leopard catch your brother ! ' He drew back his lips and the porcupine quill stuck forth, with the feathers and the flower, as he replied on the instant : ' And may the crocodile eat your sister ! '—' And may the lion——' I shouted, but as I spoke a hand was clapped on our shoulders, and our faces, so close together, were drawn apart, and behold there was a white man between us, looking down upon us and smiling. It was the one who spoke our tongue. ' Let me take you,' he said, ' for a travel in the air.' .

We were quite dumb. We tried to run away. He held us tightly by the shoulders, laughing, and spoke to the other. The other came up and his hands were filled with blue beads and copper wire. ' Never ! ' said my half-brother fiercely. ' You cannot bribe us.' ' So I perceive,' said the white man, ' but here are some new young ones who will not be so foolish.'

I turned round, and there were my three daughters, and their eyes were rolling with the love of the blue beads and the wire and the excitement of the Europe-bird. They ran after the white man right up to the creature's side where the hole was. With all my force I called on them to stop. But when I came near I saw the inside of the body was full of my tribe ; they were chattering and laughing and shaking with fear all at the same time. And in among them was my half-brother. Yes, somehow or other he had got there already. At that moment a man went to the head of the bird and suddenly there was a great roaring noise and a terrible wind. Wheee-whirroop ! that

was enough to frighten ten lions ! I jumped up in the air with my surprise, and my half-brother came to the hole and said : ‘ May the she-hyæna——’ I climbed in quickly through the opening to get at him.

Behind his head the earth all at once began running away. I looked forth : many of my people were still on the ground. The last thing I observed was my wife, whom I had not seen for some time, casting herself upon the ground with a shriek of despair.

A feeling of emptiness came then into my stomach, everywhere was a roaring noise and amidst this the cries of terror and of delight from my people. My three daughters had stuck their faces into the clear skin of the beast to look through him, and gazing thither, also, I perceived—aye-eee, what did I then see ?—a wonderful domain never before beheld by man. I had to look downwards to see this country, for it did not grow all round me like the trees of the forest. That was how we knew from the first that this was a magical land, which we were indeed privileged to behold. The white man leaned backwards, pointing, and said : ‘ Now you can see the Bantu village ; those are their huts.’ We knew at once this was false. Huts are rounded and have doors : what the white man showed us was in reality the droppings of huge birds. Then he said : ‘ Look ! here we are over your own forest.’ We saw again this was wrong, and reasoned with him : ‘ See now, we understand trees, they are our home, they tower above us night and day : we look up towards them. How can this strange moss, on which we now look down, be our forest ?’ Ha ha, we laughed at the white man. Then he said : ‘ Behold, then, in the distance, the lakes of water.’ We looked again, and sparkling on the ground we could see clearly a string of blue beads ; but these were not ordinary beads, they were

the most blue and brightly shining in the world. Hey, hey, how I longed to leap forth and snatch those blue beads to wear them in my lip !

All this time my half-brother was trying to push his head through the frame that held us. I knew what he wanted ; he was hoping to pull the clouds within, to sell them as cloth to the Bantus. But the hole in the skin would not come again. Then the white man waved his arm, the Europe-bird flew down as a bird flies, low over the earth. ‘ Behold at least,’ he said, ‘ the cows, the goats, the gazelles and the wildebeests upon the level plains.’ We looked, and there was a wonder greater than any. These were animals, even as he said, for we could see their horns and their backs and their tails : but, though they appeared to move over the earth, none of them had any legs. What a shouting arose among my people as soon as this fact was observed ! Their clamour rose higher and higher and they began to scramble quickly all about in order to see more clearly the game of this magical country. But in an instant a rushing of wind blinded us, something hit us in the middle so that we all fell over each other, and when we had picked ourselves up the bird was sitting quietly on the grass and the hole was in its side again and my daughters were already going through it. I looked up, and there we were, back in our own land, with our dear forest throwing its shadow almost to the bird’s feet.

And the next thing I saw was my wife with great tears pouring down her face, and her head and her arms shaking as she embraced her daughters whom she had thought never to see again.

The white men were also on the ground. One stood beside us as we came forth, and he laid his hand on the head of each and seemed as if reckoning. When all had

passed out he turned to the other, and then he said his last magic, in his own tongue : I heard the sound clearly and remember it well : a sound easy for me, too, to utter, since it resembles our own speech. ' O Kay, Kurnul.' That was what he said and we knew then the business was over.

At that moment, my hand going up, I felt suddenly the gazelle's horn, and a great thinking came upon me. Here was I that had run through the night to buy the medicine against the bird, that had danced the devil-dancing against the bird, here was I drawn by something that was not my own will into the very entrails of the bird—and here was I back again, safe and well, with only a trembling of the knees and a deafness in the ears and my stomach filled with the things I had seen.

'Who shall say what wonders exist in our world ?' asked my half-brother, smiling and with guile, in order to forget his earlier fears.

I looked for a long time at my half-brother.

'Some day,' he said to me quite gently, 'I will take you and show you the hart with the three heads that tell the Past, the Present and the Future.'

I listened to him in humility ; and I, too, spoke my new magic. ' O Kay, Kurnul !'

THE IMMORTAL CLOWN.

BY R. L. MÉGROZ.

IN his learned and delightful book on *Clowns and Pantomimes*, Mr. Willson Disher says, 'Satisfy people's desire for the ridiculous and they will accept your idea of the sublime.' This is a fundamental truth for the good dramatist. Comic relief may be regarded as a modern characteristic of drama brought to perfection by Shakespeare. Not that any such solemn defence of clowns is necessary, at least in my eyes, since I share the affectionate feeling of all those people who can look back upon their early memories of Harlequin and Pantaloon with undying gratitude. And yet, even leaving the drama out of consideration, it could be shown that the Harlequinade is in its origins deeply symbolic, and a pantomimic morality play mixed up with magic.

Tragedy or pathos always makes a background to the sheer clowning spirit, so that when adults accompany children to a pantomime or a circus where the true clowning is given an opportunity, if not its proper place, the adults find more to respond to than even the delighted children do. With a knowledge of the history of clowning, the adult also has in mind the biographical source of a personal pathos which seems inseparable from the laughter-maker. Perhaps owing largely to Dickens, the life and farewell of Joseph Grimaldi stamped clowning with pathos for English people. Between the Elizabethans and Grimaldi had occurred the invasion of the Italian harlequinade. A ding-dong warfare went on throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century between the Shakespearean tradition,

upheld, with many concessions to popular taste, by Garrick, and the fantastic harlequinade which was transformed by Joseph Grimaldi's father into pantomime. In the *Dunciad* Pope did not fail to use the many cheap absurdities of the new form of popular entertainment as a flail with which to beat the good-natured Colley Cibber. It is difficult to say how much of the success of pantomime was due to the genius of Joseph Grimaldi, but Drury Lane found it necessary at last to exploit the harlequinade and pantomime to compete with Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells.

We often inveigh against the demand for frivolous entertainment. The author of *Clowns and Pantomimes* (which is not a new book, by the way, but one worth getting out of the library all the same) leaves no room for doubt that the demand is nothing peculiar to this age, and the same mistake of trying to make audiences gape instead of amusing them which has ruined many modern producers was the bane of pantomime. The fad for mechanical marvels was active all over the Continent. Perrault's tales were adapted by the Forains of Paris for their pantomimes with great success, and Favart's operas filled the theatres. In Venice the comedies of Goldoni were surpassed in the popular regard by Gozzi's mixtures of fairy tale and melodrama. Goldoni went to Paris in despair, but there the same types of clown flourished, either as the Italian Arlequin, Punch or Pierrot, or the English clown or Auguste. In England the minor stage—the booths at fairs—revelled in native legends like *Dick Whittington*. The performance of *Dick Whittington* by the puppets at Southwark caused Pepys to write in his *Diary*: 'How that idle thing do work upon the people that see it, and even myself too.' But the favourite subject then among the puppets' performances was *The Children in the Wood*.

Those puppets, who had Punch for their clown, reached the height of fashion at the beginning of the eighteenth century, just before Guiseppe Grimaldi and then Rich were to adapt their methods to the pantomime stage. This was the inheritance which Joseph Grimaldi used like a genius, gathering together the scattered elements of clownship—the butt, the knave, the social satire, the tricks of the Italian Arlecchino, the stage animals of the *Commedia dell' Arte*, and adding to these the 'joke of construction.' Eventually Grimaldi was significantly called a 'Hogarth in action' for his satirical fooling.

Grimaldi both reshaped and revived a tradition which kept pantomime alive in England until the nineteenth century, and his most famous songs, 'Hot Codlins' and 'Tippetywichtet,' were for a long time sung by others. When he died there was a gap that could not be filled. When *Mother Goose* was taken to America in 1831 the clown, E. J. Parsloe, was bitterly disappointed. In London, where the Grimaldi tradition was still vital, he would have been applauded. In a country where Grimaldi was hardly even a name, the harlequinade was seen to be a disjointed, hopelessly incoherent performance. It still is, because so much of the original has been forgotten, and modern quips inserted have become mechanical 'wisecracks.' Yet the pantomime, much changed, continues, and a thin thread of the old clowning begins from the moment that the children exclaim with pleasure as Joey reappears with a bounce and shouts 'Here we are again!' And in America too, where the pantomime eventually spread and the circus even outran the English circus, a place has been kept for the clowns. From their art the films acquired a technique and a hint of the true tradition, making possible the world-wide popularity of a true clown like Charlie Chaplin. Note again, that the true clown while making

us laugh makes us sympathise, for he is the pathetic individual confronted with the bewildering world.

When the real harlequinade of the pantomime began to fade, the next development to take place before films were heard of was on the music-hall stage. In this phase new genius was revealed, culminating, if we agree with Mr. Disher that Grock was the greatest of all the music-hall clowns, with Adrien Grock, who, he says, 'like Grimaldi, is the funnier, the deeper one pries into his soul.' The stars of the music-hall and the clowns of the circus and the pantomime in their former glory are often lamented by the elder generation, but although this or that form of entertainment may wax and wane, be sure that not for long will people go without the things that touch the springs of laughter. The liking for clowning is protean, but it is rooted in human nature. Although it is true enough that Shakespeare made comic relief a part of the modern tragic drama, when comparing Elizabethan with classical drama we ought to remember that the Athenian audiences obtained relief from the satirists, whose pieces alternated with and broke up the gloom of a succession of Tragedies. And in the tragic dramas the intensity of emotion was weakened by a dehumanisation of the actors : they wore masks, which reduced the personal element while strengthening the moral symbolism. In Rome too the mythological drama was broken up by burlesque interludes of clowning not very different from those in pantomime as we know it, or used to know it. The medieval Church, first at Constantinople and later at Rome, recognised the necessity of comic relief ; holy days became holidays (since the peoples would not give up their original pagan feasts otherwise), and orthodox orgies were found to be the only successful competitors of profane orgies.

So it is that in essentials clownship has not altered much

from Mameucus, who delighted Roman audiences (to the chagrin of Juvenal, the Roman Alexander Pope), to Arlecchino, from Arlecchino to Grimaldi, from Grimaldi to Grock, from Grock to Charlie Chaplin and his successors. The long story that goes from the Athenian amphitheatre (and no doubt from much earlier, if we were to examine oriental showmanship, especially the Indian) to the studios of Los Angeles, leads to the conclusion that civilisation is to no small extent a matter of learning how and when to laugh.

If you will read another learned but fascinating book, *The Nature of Laughter*, by J. C. Gregory, you will be convinced of the seriousness of laughter. Only foolish people will sneer at clowns, for the clowning spirit is an elementary and therefore universal relief and refinement of emotion. It is also a way of escape from the standardisation of modern life, the monotonous routine of an industrial age which hedges in and tramples on the free spirit of the individual. When some years ago fashionable English youth adopted a monstrous novelty in trousers, which became known as 'Oxford bags,' the gesture was an unconscious expression of the clowning spirit of revolt against the conventional. At least one would do well to remember Charlie Chaplin's nether garments before denying such an interpretation. Grock favoured patched trousers. Patched or baggy or ragged clothes have been part of the clown's costume from the pagan days of Greece and Rome. The lozenge design of Harlequin's dress is merely a symbolical representation of his rags and patches, though the varied colours became also symbols for certain emotions. The red represented anger, the black despair, the yellow jealousy, and the blue stood for faithfulness to Columbine.

Originally the clown was an ill-treated butt, and laughter was not free from cruelty. This is philosophically traced

by Mr. Gregory as clearly as it is shown historically by Mr. Disher. The pleasure of recognising the incongruous (because it is a change from the ordinary), which makes us laugh at a man chasing his hat and suddenly sitting down on it, includes evidently a feeling of superiority or cruelty also. The clown becomes a sort of scapegoat to relieve us of such feelings. In ancient Rome Juvenal complained that the delight of the Roman audience was to hear how many blows Mamercus could take, but the superior people watched robbers, decked out as Prometheus or Dædalus, eaten alive by bears. Mr. Disher points out that 'law-abiding Elizabethans eschewed the playhouse but took their children to see heretics burned, or traitors hanged, drawn and quartered. To-day cruelty finds satisfaction less in seeing Charlie Chaplin hit a bully (capable of bending a lamp-post at a blow) with a brick, or silence a mouthing soprano with a custard tart, than in murder trials and the Waterloo cup.' Or, one might add, in hunting birds and animals that have been bred to be shot for sport. When we are cruel to-day we do not laugh with brutal pleasure, but pay lip-service to Justice, Sport, or some other portmanteau abstraction.

How much cruelty there may be in our happy laughter is not to be decided by a sweeping generalisation : it must be left for each laugher to estimate. What remains true, and perhaps may deepen our appreciation of their art, is that the company of the laughter-makers have often hobnobbed with misery and been gripped by tragedy. The impression created by the Grimaldi legend was deepened by the lives of the music-hall comedians in their general unhappiness. Arthur Roberts, who in old age received a benefit to save him from starvation, was luckier than many of his fellows. Dan Leno went mad. T. E. Dunville and Mark Sheridan committed suicide. 'Marie Lloyd,' says Mr. Disher, 'after three un-

happy marriages, had to come back to the halls for her livelihood to sing "I'm the ruin that Cromwell knocked abaht a bit" while her life ebbed. George Formby, dying of consumption, made a jest of the cough in order to provide for his wife and children before it killed him.'

There seems to be a deep kinship between the unhappy makers of laughter and the unhappy music-makers. That hackneyed quotation from Shelley :

*Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught ;*

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought,

is a true pointer. The poet and the clown are the arch-enemies of dullness and cruelty. What would civilisation become if we lost the springs of laughter and the light of beauty ? It is a nice question whether any one of the trio could survive the death of either of the others.

A CANOE IN LITHUANIA.

BY MAJOR R. RAVEN-HART.

‘ . . . It has a good current and several rapids, and flows chiefly through very lonely forests ; but wolves are rarely seen on its banks in the summer.’

That is the sort of thing that makes a canoer sit up and reach for an Atlas. What is this river, anyhow ? Nemunas ? Never heard of it, and it’s not in the gazetteer. What towns does he mention ? Merkine, Alytus, Kaunas : hang it all, they’re not in the gazetteer either. Is it a joke, has he invented a river ? ‘ . . . flows into the Baltic at Klaipeda ’ : that gives at any rate one known name, and even Klaipeda seems vaguely familiar.

And so finally we get it, the river we know as the Njemen or Memel, flowing through what my Atlas calls Kovno, the capital of Lithuania ; and it is added to the list of rivers to be done ‘ some day,’ that typical phrase of the canoer.

It must be about the most disputed, most political river in Europe, now that the Saar is out of the running. It starts away up in Russia, and navigation on it across the frontier into Poland is forbidden : it cuts right across Poland, canoeable all the way, flowing west until it gets to Grodno and then turning north : soon after this it crosses the ‘ demarcation line,’ the *de facto* boundary between Poland and Lithuania, which however the latter country refuses to recognise as the frontier, Poland having ‘ seized ’ the territory beyond it—so here is again a prohibited section, for canoers as for all other navigation : then it flows on north to Kaunas, and there turns west again, becoming the boundary between

Germany and the Memel Territory, again a disputed area, at the moment in Lithuanian hands: and finally empties itself into the Kurisches Haff (or Kuršiu Ilanka if you prefer it, and the second 'u' should have a little tail to it), one of the huge lagoons that border the Baltic, reaching this sea by a narrow gap in the dunes that separate lagoon from sea, near Memel itself (*alias* Klaipeda).

Of course if you wanted to do a cruise that would provide almost unlimited copy, including probably first-hand descriptions of the insides of Russian and Polish and Lithuanian prisons, you would start in Russia. I was tempted to start in Poland (I may yet do so 'some day'), since both nations, Poland and Lithuania, insisted that as far as they were concerned there would be no trouble at the 'demarcation line,' but that the *other* country was of course notoriously exigent. Still, it was suggested that if I had a partner who spoke both Polish and Lithuanian but was himself of neither nationality, and carried the permits and letters of recommendation which they would both be glad to supply (and carried them with great care separately, so as not to show the Polish papers to Lithuanian patrols or vice versa), I should probably get through without being held up more than a dozen times a day or so.

As I already had a partner, an American boy of sixteen, I crushed my ambitions and did only the Lithuanian section, from Merkine (there ought to be a dot over the last letter) near the boundary, reachable by autobus from Kaunas over roads presenting all possible surfaces and some impossible ones. Language troubles were at once simplified and complicated by the fact that we were accompanied on the first part of the cruise by two Lithuanian canoers: simplified in that we had no need to trouble about that extremely difficult language, perhaps the nearest to the original 'Aryan' of

any in Europe ; but complicated by the fact that one of them spoke Polish and Lithuanian fluently, but only scanty French and less German, and the other added fluent Russian and Esthonian and Latvian and some other things I forget, and passable Esperanto. As a result I found myself having to talk English to my companion, French to one of our guides, and Esperanto to the other, all more or less simultaneously with ghastly results.

We camped that first night on the banks of the river, and wolves did not trouble us, although we were well away from the village. In the morning the children from a neighbouring farm brought us fresh milk and eggs and wild strawberries (those tiny ones that beat the garden giants all to blazes) : I regretted deeply my ignorance of Lithuanian, as there was a boy of twelve who so badly wanted to be friendly.

The Nemunas did not disappoint us. It is a clear, friendly river, with a fair current ; and the banks are rarely without fine woods along them, chiefly oaks and birches, that perfect contrast of rude force and delicate grace, but also with blue-green pine-groves as a variant. The rapids, on the other hand, left us cold : there were not nearly enough of them, and they were not large enough, despite their promising names : the Ram, and the Little Devils, and the Devil's Bath. Perhaps the most striking feature of this upper part is the really exceptional loop that the river makes, in part very like the profile outline of a head : we found ourselves heading literally towards every point of the compass, and we had a run of over thirty miles from one certain point to another, the direct distance over land between them being less than three—I believe this is a record.

All this part is known to the Lithuanian himself as 'The Singing Country' because of the happy and peaceful nature

of the people there, and certainly we found pleasantness and helpfulness everywhere, and smiles went far to bridge the language-chasm. As a matter of fact this same title might well serve for all Lithuania, since nowhere else have I heard so much song (except perhaps in Nubia) : it seems impossible for them to begin any rhythmic work, mowing or milking for instance, without this rhythm suggesting a tune, and equally impossible to sit idle without singing. The folk-dances are famous, but we were not lucky enough to see any : you have to seize the opportunity of a feast, wedding or christening or what-not, to witness them.

The key-note of Lithuania was to us the combination of extremely primitive and ultra-modern. On this river, for instance, we saw practically no craft other than our own, on the one hand—and the collapsible canoe, using as it does the technique of rubber-vulcanisation, is as modern as the motor-car ; and, as a contrast, on the other hand wooden boats, true dug-outs, made in one piece from the trunk of a tree. Again, at Alytus our ' hotel ' was primitive in the extreme, with of course no proper sanitary arrangements, and with beds that were clean but which groaned and protested under us from age ; and yet we ate here magnificently, one of the best meals of the whole season—soup ; and steak with poached eggs and anchovies and lemon and potatoes and sweet salad with cream ; and then ' blini,' potato-cakes with more cream. This was at a so-called club, which however any respectable traveller could use without formalities : it cost, incidentally, less than two shillings a head. Again, at Prienai the only room we could get was a four-bedded one, at another equally primitive inn ; but at Birštonas, our next stop, beautifully hidden in pine-forests, we found modern hotels as good as any at, say, Vichy. (This place, like Vichy, is what they call a ' Kurortu ' : when the Lithuanian is short

of a word he seems just to grab a German one, spell it phonetically, and stick a 'u' on at the end.)

One of the charms of these Lithuanian villages is the way-side cross : nothing whatever like those of western Europe however, and in fact Christian only in so far as they may be surmounted by a small crucifix or contain the figures of saints. In reality they link with far older religions, and their form suggests the East rather than the West, pagodas rather than churches. We must have seen fifty or so, no two even vaguely resembling each other in details, but all with this feeling of the Orient about them. So little are they Christian that at one time the Church refused to bless them, even when they embodied Christian symbols or figures, and had them removed from the near neighbourhood of churches and cemeteries : they were and again are especially common near graves, making it likely that some ancient cult of the dead is involved.

The wooden houses in these villages are also delightful, usually thatched and extremely simple except for a sort of pillared porch : the ornamentation is as a rule very crude, but the proportions excellent. On the other hand, the more modern houses were frankly atrocious, built during a period of execrable style, and badly at that. It is also to be regretted that practically all the shop-keepers and inn-proprietors seem to be Jews, so that we got very little contact with the real people.

Kaunas, the capital, is another example of that contrast between primitive and modern. Here you have buildings that might well be in Paris or Berlin, in good 'functional' style well understood and well applied ; and next door to them single-story shanties that my companion said might well be from some negro slum of an American city. In the same way the hotels are either excellent and expensive, or cheap and quite impossible. It is not a lovable city,

although there are some nice corners down by the river : it was here, by the way, that Napoleon's army crossed, on four pontoon-bridges, on its way to the disastrous Russian campaign, while the Emperor watched from the hill.

We saw some modern Lithuanian art here, mostly derivative from bad French exaggerations, and very dull. The native handicrafts are on the other hand good, but very little was to be had of them except at one shop, and this seemed to cater for the American tourist who arrived by air and left again the same day, having 'seen Lithuania'—the prices were on that level. At the villages we sought vainly for hand work, finding a little at the Kaunas market only, hand-woven towels and girdles chiefly.

After Kaunas the river is calmer, slower, but very pleasant between sandy shores and pine-groves, excellent for bathing and sunning : Lithuania is by the way a very nudist country, both from old tradition and modern common sense. One of the villages here, Zapyškis, has perhaps the loveliest of the wooden churches of Lithuania : we asked the sacristan why the antlers of a deer were up on the wall, and he told us how the beast had arrived one day, 'a long time ago,' swimming across the river with a painting of Our Lord between these antlers, this painting being in the church to this day. He told us also that the reason why this church is a few feet below ground-level is that when it was first built Perkunas, the old god whose holy place the site had been (his altar is still there), was so furious that he threw lightning at it : it cowered a little into the earth to avoid the bolt, but remained here despite him. All this part is full of legends : not far from here was the last stronghold of the old pagan religion, where the ever-burning fire was kept until Christianity finally triumphed—in outward appearances at any rate.

Another day brought us to the exceptionally attractive town of Jurbarkas, with another good old wooden church, and a town-hall in a style that almost made my companion home-sick, so perfectly 'colonial' was it, in the best traditions of Virginia, his State (I beg its pardon : 'Commonwealth'). We also discovered an amusing custom here, the motor-bus first stopping at the inn and then having to drive round this town-hall to a garage behind it to fill up with petrol, and finally pass the inn again rather than turn in the narrow streets. By a prescriptive right all the urchins of the town pile aboard for this little free ride round the block, the driver obligingly stopping at the inn again for them to get off. That sort of thing is so very typical of Lithuania : I mean the kindness and simplicity of a primitive people not spoilt even by contact with machinery—and chauffeurs are notoriously disobliging as a rule, thanks to the equally notorious contrariness of the petrol engine.

That day we had visited on the right the fine ruins of Christmemel, a fortress-castle of one of the Teutonic Orders ; and then next day on the left came East Prussia, German thanks to these Monk-Knights. On the right was the too-famous 'Memel Territory' ; and, with apologies to our kindly Lithuanian hosts, we found it a definitely German area, not in the least Lithuanian—everything, language, food, cleanliness, was German at once as we crossed the border, and there was as much difference in passing from Lithuania to this 'territory' as there is in passing from Belgium to Germany. That it was once as Lithuanian as Kaunas there is no doubt ; that its present German character is very largely due to carefully planned colonisation while it was in German hands is almost certain ; but that this German character predominates to-day is undeniable.

We ended the cruise at Tilsit, where Napoleon and

Alexander met on a raft to sign the treaty, one way of obtaining neutral 'ground.' As always, I enquired for local specialities, and got what they called 'Tilsit beefsteak,' a rissole of minced meat with a sauce of cream and bacon, not very striking ; but I got also the quite unforgettable 'Bear-trap,' an insidious concoction of honey and a sort of whisky, the idea being that the sweetness induces the bear to lap up too much of the mixture, and that his sleepiness then makes him an easy prey to the hunter. We could believe it, to judge by the difficulty we found in moving on from that eating-house, and our unwillingness to do anything but doze that afternoon.

And so wolves at the start of the trip and bears at the end of it seemed to frame it neatly, as a cruise to recommend to other canoers, especially to such as like to get off the beaten track and visit areas as yet unspoilt by the tourist.

THE PRINCE.

*Let him sleep here in peace. Let the young prince
Forget his dynasty, his ancestors,
The kingdom founded a millennium since,
And frontiers threatened by to-morrow's wars.
Statecraft weighs heavily : be merciful,
Pity the weariness that wears a crown,
And majesty for ever dutiful.
Since it is night, let him creep down unknown
To mingle with the people in his dreams,
And in the market-place hear chance words spoken,
Freely rising like light over the streams
Of anonymous humanity flowing unbroken.
For when he wakes, his moment's freedom fled,
Who shall dare pity this anointed head ?*

RICHARD CHURCH.

THE SEVEN HUNTERS.

BY ALASDAIR ALPIN MACGREGOR.

*'Three men alive on Flannan Isle,
Who thought of three men dead . . . !'*

LYING out in the North Atlantic, some twenty miles off Gallan Head, in the Outer Hebrides, is a group of seven strange, uninhabited islands, with a number of smaller islets and skerries adjacent to them, known as the Flannan Isles, or the Seven Hunters.

It was in the year, 1900, just a twelvemonth after the lighthouse had been completed on Eilean Mor, the largest of the group, that a mysterious incident occurred, which to this day remains one of the many insoluble problems of the northern seas. Passing vessels failed to pick up the light where it was expected, and in consequence were confused as to their exact bearings. The light, it was thought, had burned itself out for some weird reason. A tempest had been raging for several days. When eventually it had subsided sufficiently to enable the lighthouse relief vessel to visit the scene, not a trace of humanity could be found anywhere, either dead or alive.

The three light-keepers had vanished !

In order to appreciate fully the dramatic setting of this tragedy and mystery, some descriptive details of the Seven Hunters may not be inappropriate at this juncture. To be precise, they lie in latitude $58^{\circ} 17'$ north, and longitude $7^{\circ} 35'$ west. That is to say, some twenty miles west of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides. Though there are seven main islands, together with the lesser rocks and skerries

besetting them, they are so small and compact that at times it is no easy matter at sea to differentiate between them.

The principal members of the Seven Hunters fall naturally into three groups. Eilean Mor and Eilean Tighe form the northern group : Soray, Sgeir Toman, and Sgeir Righinn constitute the southern group : the western group includes Eilean a' Ghobha and Roareim.

On the whole, these seven islands vary little in appearance. All of them attain a remarkable altitude, having regard to their limited area. Their cliffs of weather-beaten gneiss tower above the Atlantic rollers at altitudes varying from 150 feet, as in the case of Roareim, to more than 260 feet in the case of Eilean Mor. Some conception of the remarkable height attained by these cliffs in proportion to the area of the respective islands may be had when it is remembered that Eilean Mor, the largest of the Seven Hunters, has an area of just under thirty-nine acres, that Eilean Tighe, the second island in point of size, is only eighteen acres in extent, that Eilean a' Ghobha, the second in point of height, with cliffs rising 165 feet, is twelve acres, that Roareim's area is roughly seven acres, and that Sgeir Righinn, the smallest of the group, occupies no more than three acres.

When viewed from the sea and at some little distance, the Seven Hunters appear for all the world like a set of gigantic cliffs, each surmounted by a flat plateau.

All these islands share the distinction of possessing no point at which a landing may be effected without great difficulty and peril, because of the restless winds and tides, and the vagaries of the North Atlantic swell. Only during the summer or early autumn, and even then under the most felicitous conditions, is it possible to land at all with a modicum of safety.

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The history of these weird fragments of what has been termed the Lost Continent goes back to early times. Ecclesiastical remains on Eilean Mor have been assigned to a date that would suggest the occupation of the group in early Christian times, probably by hermit monks of the Old Celtic Church. But George Buchanan, the celebrated Scots Latinist and historian of the sixteenth century, ascribes the earliest remains on the Seven Hunters to the Druids. He refers to the group as *Insulæ Sacræ*, since at that period, and for some centuries previously, they bore a widespread reputation for sanctity. Situated close to the lighthouse is the ancient, drystone structure known as *Teampull Beannachadh*, Temple of Blessing, which has been likened in appearance to a large dog-kennel.¹ Its external length and breadth are twelve feet, and nine to ten feet, respectively. It attains an internal height of about six feet to the apex of the sloping roof, which is still almost complete. At the west end there enters a small, low doorway. Authorities are uncertain as to whom this building belonged. 'Two saints seem to contest for the honour of giving their name to the Flannan Isles,' writes Dr. John MacCulloch, the well-known Scottish geologist, who visited these islands during his researches in the Outer Hebrides. 'St. Flannan was Bishop of Killaloe in 639,' continues the 'Stone Doctor,' 'and he is canonised in the Irish Calendar, but St. Flann was the son of Maol-duine, Abbot of Iona, who died in 890, and who is to decide?'

An authority of a date more recent disposes of the difficulty, however, by ascribing this and other structures on the Flannan Isles to the men who used to voyage annually from the Lewis to these remote outposts, for the purposes of collecting sea-birds and their eggs and feathers, and of capturing what they could of the wild sheep browsing on

¹ See *Ronay*, by Malcolm Stewart (Oxford University Press, 1933).

the grassy plateaux of the larger of them. It is not the least unlikely that these hardy seamen from Lewis constructed on the Flannans one or more buildings for their own accommodation during the expedition. The Flannans, it may be mentioned incidentally, form part of Uig, the westernmost parish of the great Island of Lewis ; and to this day the only regular communication between them and the rest of the world (apart from the Northern Lighthouse Board's vessels effecting reliefs or landing stores) is maintained by the people of the Island of Bernera, in Uig, whence sheep-owners and shepherds sail out to them twice annually, and within the same week if possible, to attend to and exchange some fifty-five sheep. In fact, for many generations now, the grazing rights of the Seven Hunters have belonged to the natives of the Great Bernera—that rocky and extensive island situated in wild Loch Roag. During the summer months, however, they are visited spasmodically by lobster-fishermen, and also by trawlermen, who are often accused of having added an odd Flannan sheep to their larder !

Toward the west of Eilean Mor, there are more ruins, the condition of which renders it impossible to-day to postulate either their original shape, or the purpose to which they were put. In Lewis these ruins are known traditionally by a Gaelic name denoting the Bothies of MacPhail's Sons ; but who MacPhail was, or what he and his sons were doing on the Seven Hunters, no one can tell.

Two ruined structures are to be seen on Eilean Tighe, Island of the House, as might be expected from the name. The walls of one of these are about three feet in height, and three feet in thickness. On the east side may be traced the remains of a doorway.

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That from early times the Seven Hunters have been noted

for the excellence of their pasturage, supporting a large number of sheep, is shown by the quaint account of them given by Donald Monro, High Dean of the Isles. Toward the close of the sixteenth century, the venerable Dean wrote of these 'Sevin Haley Iles' as follows :

'First, furth 50 myle in the Occident seas from the coste of the parochin Vye in Lewis, towarts the west northwest lyes the sevin iles of Flanayn, claid with girth, and Haley iles, verey natural gressing within thir saids iles ; infinit wyld scheipe therein, quhilk na man knawes to quhom the said sheipe appertaines within them that lives this day of the countrymen ; bot M'Cloyd of the Lewis, att certaine tymes in the zeir, sendis men in, and huntis and slayis maney of thir sheipe. The flesche of thir sheipe cannot be eaten be honest men for fatnesse, for ther is na flesche on them, bot all quhyte lyke. talloune, and it is verey wyld gusted lykways. The saids iles are noudir manurit nor inhabit, bot full of grein high hills, full of wyld sheipe in the sevin iles forsaid, quhilk may not be outrune. They pertaine to M'Cloyd of the Lewis.'

The Seven Hunters are of further interest in that some very queer customs were observed there by those who yearly visited these islands on fowling or sealing expeditions, and to collect in addition feathers, down, quills, and possibly sea-birds' eggs. Martin Martin, from whom we learn most of what we know of the Hebrides during the seventeenth century, informs us that, if the seamen from Lewis happened to be sailing in the direction of the Seven Hunters before an east wind, and the wind suddenly went round to the west, they would abandon every intention of landing, and immediately sail back to Lewis again, even though they might have been within a stone's-throw of their place of disembarkation. Again, if the crew should include in its number any apprentice, who was untutored in the recognised

punctilios of fowling, it was incumbent that he should be placed under the direction of a member of the fowling party who would instruct him as to how he ought to behave himself when on the hallowed soil of these Isles. Once the boat had been lashed to the rocks, the crew scaled the cliff from the wonted landing-place by means of a wooden ladder held in position by a huge stone, in order to prevent its slipping back into the sea. The ledge of rock, on which it was customary to land, was held in great veneration, since the crew regarded it as the spot at which it had pleased God to deliver them from the perils of the ocean. When all the fowlers were ashore, they bared their heads, and made the wonted sun-wise turn known as *deasil*, and, in so doing, thanked God for their safe deliverance. Then they removed their upper garments, and placed them on a stone reserved for the purpose. Thereafter they approached the Chapel, wherein they engaged in prolonged prayer and meditation. For a member of the party to kill a fowl before everyone had ascended the ladder, or after vespers, was deemed an unpardonable crime, whereas the killing of a fowl with a stone was looked upon at all times as 'a great barbarity, and directly contrary to antient custom.' No one was permitted to take away with him from the Flannans any sheep-suet : neither was he allowed to appropriate or eat anything on these islands unbeknown to the other members of the expedition.

Furthermore, the use of certain words was strictly taboo among the seamen whilst they were ashore on the Flannans. Consequently, they referred to water as *burn*, and not as *uisge* : a rock was spoken of as *cruey* (from the Gaelic, *cruaidh*, meaning hard) : *vah* (*uamh*, a cave) signified the sea-shore. Likewise, it was unlawful to allude to the Island of St. Kilda as *Hirta*, the ancient Gaelic name by which it

is still known throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. St. Kilda had to be referred to as 'the High Country.' Even the name, Flannan, had to be eschewed during these visits. When it was found necessary to mention any of these islands, they were obliged to do so by calling it 'the Country.'

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Apart from the abundance and variety of sea-bird life, there is little else of interest about the Seven Hunters except the lighthouse mystery, to which we shall turn in a moment. The chief mammals of importance consist of the sheep that, as in the case of North Rona (now likewise unpeopled), are landed there from Lewis for grazing. But much more numerous than the sheep are the grey seals haunting these precipitous shores. It is exceedingly doubtful, however, whether the seal ever breeds on the Seven Hunters, for even the seal, with all his agility, must find it very difficult to obtain a landing on these steep, rock-bound outposts. Neither rats nor mice are to be found; but rabbits have now overrun Eilean Mor, and have destroyed much of its rich vegetation. The rabbits were introduced many years ago by some short-sighted light-keepers.

The list of birds, resident and migratory, compiled by Eagle Clarke, who spent a couple of weeks on Eilean Mor in 1904, reaches a total of 112 species. Clarke also collected 11 species of Coleoptera, and 35 species of Diptera.

Leach's fork-tailed petrel is the most important of the birds found on the Seven Hunters. The puffin is also very common, and nests largely in the innumerable rabbit burrows. The eggs of the fork-tailed petrel are rare; and collectors usually offer good prices for them—although the wife of a light-keeper told me at the shore-station of Breascleit some years ago that a taxidermist in Oban was

offering her husband twopence per egg. 'My husband wouldn't *blow* a petrel's egg for twopence!' she remarked, with a suggestion in her voice of grievance mixed with a certain amount of pride and Scots independence.

Great risk is often entailed in procuring sea-birds' eggs on the Flannan Isles. The method in getting them off inaccessible ledges from above, equipped with bamboo-rod, to the end of which is attached a piece of looped wire and a hanging net-bag, is still employed by the light-keepers, just as it was by the natives of St. Kilda up to the time of the evacuation of their island-fastness in the autumn of 1930. This method requires both skill and patience. Flannan light-keepers have told me that sometimes they 'play' an egg for twenty minutes or half an hour before they are successful in scooping it into the net-bag. Their wives use these eggs extensively in cooking and baking. In order to ensure that they are as fresh as possible, the keepers resort regularly to the same nests.

The guillemots and razor-bills lay their eggs on the very edge of the ledges. The result is that, if the hen bird be startled when on her nest, she frequently precipitates her eggs into the sea, or has them smashed on the rocks below. The kittiwake, on the other hand, builds a nest of grass and clay on the ledge. Her eggs, therefore, are less liable to fall out when she is disturbed. The mud she carries in beakfuls from any fresh-water mud-holes on the islands.

With the rapid development of shipping during the nineteenth century, the Seven Hunters became a serious menace in the night-time, or in time of fog. Situated, as they are, close to the course usually adopted by vessels bound *via* the Butt of Lewis and the Pentland Firth for the east coast of

Scotland and England, or for Scandinavian and Baltic ports, these unlit, inhospitable outposts claimed many a victim. A crew, whose ship crashed on the Flannans, stood little chance of being rescued at the best: even if the survivors succeeded in obtaining a footing on one of the islands, they ultimately succumbed to starvation or to exposure.

Disaster followed upon disaster, until at length representation was made that led to the decision to construct a lighthouse on Eilean Mor. This arduous and perilous responsibility was undertaken by the Northern Lighthouse Board in 1895. As it was necessary first of all to blast two landing-places and two zigzag staircases out of solid gneiss (one of each on the west side of the island, and one of each on the east), to erect cranes and derricks at both landing-places, and to carry all the requisite material two hundred feet up the face of the cliffs by means of wire pulleys—all of which had to be accomplished in the midst of raging seas—it was not until December, four years later, that the lighthouse itself was ready for service. The lantern-tower, some seventy-five feet in height, was installed with a light of 140,000 candle-power, visible over a range of forty miles under normal conditions.

The Flannan Isles light-station had been operating just a year when there occurred the tragedy, the precise nature of which still remains unknown, and is likely to remain so for ever. Then, as now, the station was manned by four light-keepers, three of whom served two months on the Flannan Light, and were each relieved in rotation by the fourth, who resided in the shore-station at Breascleit, on Loch Roag. Weather permitting, the relief was carried out regularly by the *Hesperus*, one of the agile vessels owned by the Northern Lighthouse Board.

When the *Hesperus* arrived at the Flannan Isles on Decem-

ber, 26, 1900, the relief already was some days overdue, owing no doubt to inclement seas. The three men believed to have been on duty at the time were James Ducat, Thomas Marshall, and Donald MacArthur. The fourth man, Joseph Moore to name, was now returning from the shore-station to relieve one of the three. As the *Hesperus* hove-to off the east landing-stage, which was the more suitable on this occasion because of the direction of the wind, skipper and crew were not a little surprised that the light-keepers did not answer to the customary signals, for, as a rule, the arrival of the relief-steamer was observed when she was still a goodly distance from the islands. Surprise turned to dismay when, on closer examination, it was noticed that the east landing-place showed none of the usual indications that the *Hesperus* was expected. The idea that, perhaps, preparations to receive the relief had been made at the *west* landing was not entertained for a moment. Three skilled light-keepers, by this time well inured to the conditions of storm and prolonged isolation associated with the Seven Hunters, were not likely to anticipate the arrival of the *Hesperus* at the *west* landing-place when the skipper found the *east* the more practicable !

With some difficulty Joseph Moore was put ashore on Eilean Mor, together with the usual mails and provisions. In the ordinary course of events, the light-keeper, whose turn it was to be relieved, would have been waiting about the landing-place, ready to be transferred aboard ; and the *Hesperus* would have returned with him that afternoon to the shore-station at Breascleit. True it was that a passing vessel had reported the extinction of the Flannan Light a day or two earlier, and that the natives dwelling among the remote sea-creeks of western Lewis had failed to observe the beam on particular nights. However, this caused no alarm

at the time, as the neighbourhood had been wrapped in sea-fogs of varying density for some weeks previously.

But no light shone when the sea-fogs had cleared away ! It now was certain that something of a serious nature had happened—something, perhaps, of a tragic nature. While the relief-steamer lay off the landing-place at a distance sufficient to prevent her being brought into sudden contact with the cliffs, Moore hurried up the long, zigzag staircase to the lighthouse. The gate admitting one to the enclosure, in which lay the lighthouse, the keepers' dwelling-house, and the more adjacent outbuildings, was closed. So, too, were the outer doors. Moore immediately flung them open, and made his way to the living-room. He found it empty. The clock on the mantelshelf had ticked itself to a standstill. In the fireplace lay the cold, dead cinders of the last warmth enjoyed by the missing light-keepers—chill welcome, indeed, on a mid-winter's day in the North Atlantic ! Imagining for a moment that, maybe, they had overslept, Moore then dashed into the bedroom. But it, in like manner, was lifeless. In bewilderment, he hastened back to the landing-place to seek succour. On learning his story, two more men were transferred ashore with some difficulty. The three of them now proceeded to make the fullest investigation. They ransacked the lighthouse-tower and adjoining buildings ; but no trace could they find of the light-keepers. Then they scoured the surface, cliffs, and caverns of Eilean Mor, but with equally little result. They again examined carefully the landing-place at which they had just disembarked, but found it precisely in the order in which it had been left, when the previous relief had been carried out on December, 6, just twenty days earlier. They then clambered down to the west landing-place. Though there were evidences at this point of recent storms, the crane,

fixed as it still is in a concrete base some eighty feet above the sea, appeared to have escaped damage. Its jib was lowered and fastened to the rock in the usual fashion ; and the tarpaulin remained tightly wrapped round the barrel of the crane, protecting the hawser from sea-spray and the corroding influences of other epigene agents. Yet, on closer inspection it was discovered that a box kept in a hollow in the rocks, some forty feet above the level of the crane platform, had been dislodged—that is to say, at a height approximately 120 feet above the sea. This box contained a number of spare ropes and crane-handles. Several of the ropes were found scattered upon the face of the cliffs some little distance below this point. It looked very much as though a tremendous wave had come tearing up from the west, had carried away the box, had broken it open, and had scattered its contents about the cliffs, or swept them into the sea. One or two of the ropes, I believe, actually were found entwined round the crane. Other evidences that this side of Eilean Mor had been subjected to a storm of the most violent character were the facts that a great stone exceeding a ton in weight was observed to have been moved a considerable distance, having regard to its massiveness, and that much of the iron railings fringing the lower part of the stone staircase had been dislocated and twisted.

But the evidence at the west landing-place gave no definite clue, though its storm-shattered appearance, when considered in conjunction with some of the evidence obtained in the habitable part of the lighthouse premises, seemed to suggest at least one plausible explanation. It was discovered that the oil-skins and sea-boots of Ducat and Marshall were missing. Joseph Moore, who knew well the ways of his fellow-light-keepers, was able to confirm the point that, only when they were obliged to inspect the landing-stages in time of

storm, did they wear this equipment. The third man apparently had gone out as though in a hurry, leaving both his oil-skin and sea-boots behind him, since these were found in their proper place in the lighthouse premises. This gave weight to the theory that, during one of the many storms engulfing the Seven Hunters that wild December, the light-keepers, anxious lest everything had not been made doubly fast at the west landing-place, ventured to reach the scene, and were either carried off by a terrific gale, or swept away by a stupendous wave that had left its trail of havoc as already described. One such wave, as we know, made its fury felt on objects more than a hundred feet above the level of the sea.

Although this theory gained considerable currency and acceptance, the lighthouse world naturally had difficulty in accepting it. To men in the service of the Northern Lighthouse Board, it seemed unreasonable—nay, untenable—that, if a storm of such violence were raging, three tried and experienced hands would venture forth to a spot as perilous as is the west landing-place on Eilean Mor under such circumstances.

Certain bare facts we do possess, however. The record of happenings on the Seven Hunters had been kept punctiliously by Ducat, the principal keeper. From the log found by those who made the search, it was evident that on December 12th and 13th a furious gale had been blowing from a westerly direction, and also that this gale had subsided considerably on the 14th. The last entry made on the slate by Ducat was timed 9 a.m., and dated Saturday, December, 15. Therefore, whenever the tragedy occurred, it obviously was after that. Possibly it was later in the morning of the same day, or perhaps in the afternoon. Though it was noted from other meteorological sources that by the 15th the gale

had fallen almost to a fresh breeze, the seas around the Seven Hunters, in all probability, were still running high with freakish swells that crashed upon these cliffs at unexpected moments.

The condition, in which the lighthouse and habitable premises were found, helped the investigators to fix the time of the fatality more precisely. The final entry on the slate, as I have said, was 9 a.m. But it had been noted that the morning's routine duties had been performed subsequent to that hour. The big lamps in the lantern-tower had been trimmed in readiness for another night's vigil : the canteens and oil fountains were primed : the lens and mechanism had been cleaned and polished in the usual way after a night's revolving. All this took time. Furthermore, everything in the kitchen was in order. Utensils used in the preparation and consumption of that morning's breakfast were all cleaned and in their places. This seems to add to the conviction that doom befell the keepers in the late forenoon, and before lunch-time.

And, finally, Captain Holman of the S.S. *Archer* reported that, at midnight on the 15th/16th December, he had passed the Seven Hunters on a course on which, having due regard to weather conditions, he was bound to have picked up the Flannan Light, had it been showing. That midnight he saw no light.

So, while we are able to fix with a degree of certainty the day of the tragedy, and even the hour of day within reasonable limits, the cause and nature of this haunting tragedy still remain a mystery.

Thirty-six years have come and gone since that wild December ; and no one is any nearer a solution. The sea, unlike humans, has a terrifying way of keeping its secrets.

When home in the Lewis a few years ago, I happened one

evening to be visiting the light-keepers at the lighthouse perched above the wild, northern tides at the Butt of Lewis. They chanced at the time to be speaking by wireless to their comrades on the Flannans, as they do at least twice at stated periods every day, transmitting news to them, receiving news from them, and discussing intelligence of a domestic nature. Soon the Flannan Light was streaking the tides of the North Atlantic with unerring precision, and with an effulgence that convinced me that the man devoid of a sense of reverence were better dead. By this time a gale of no mean velocity had reached its maximum. It was then that I had that terrifying and awe-inspiring experience known only to those intimately acquainted with the sea and the art of pharology—the experience of being high up in an island lighthouse, when the very tower is rocking visibly around and beneath one, and the foam and spindrift of turbulent seas are blinding the lantern with dark, foreboding shadows.

Since writing the above, I have read of the mysterious disappearance on Sunday, November 15, 1936, of two of the three lightkeepers stationed at the Monach or Shillay Lighthouse. Shillay is the most westerly of a cluster of five small, low-lying islands known as Monach, or Heiskeir, situated in the Atlantic some five miles west of North Uist, in the Outer Hebrides. Though formerly these Islands carried a considerable crofting and fishing community, to-day the population has dwindled to about twenty souls. With the exception of the lightkeepers on Shillay, and of the lobster-fishermen visiting the group during the summer months and occupying rude huts which they erect for themselves, the entire population resides on Ceann Ear, the largest of the group.

Shillay is separated from the remainder of the Monach Isles by a deep channel roughly a third of a mile in width, and known as the Sound of Shillay; and, although mystery still enshrouds the loss of the two lightkeepers, it is thought that they may have perished in a squall while returning across the Sound of Shillay with the mails and provisions they had collected on Ceann Ear earlier in the day.

SHABKADR FORT.

BY BRIGADIER R. C. DUNCAN.

ON a fine day of December we took the road and drove out of Peshawar, the attractive capital of the North-West Frontier Province. The sun shone in a cloudless blue sky and a slight nip in the air gave us instinctively the pleasant feeling that life really was worth living. We were on our way to the Mohmand Border, to Shabkadr Fort, seventeen miles distant.

Nearly everyone who travels to the North-West Frontier of India, whether it be on business or for pleasure, is advised to pay a visit to the Khyber Pass. The romance of the Khyber has become almost a legend to the exclusion of other interesting places in this romantic corner of India. Probably, even as a child, you have been told about or read accounts of this famous Pass—about the camel caravans that travel slowly up and down its winding road to and from Afghanistan, about the campaigns that have taken place in its neighbourhood, and about the now defunct Khyber Rifles. However, there are many other places of unusual interest on the North-West Frontier, which are not often visited by tourists and whose charms are not extolled in books, and Shabkadr is one of them.

We kept the racecourse on our left and passed the Peshawar Fort, which looks with obvious disdain upon Peshawar City and has always, to me, the air of a very, very righteous man gazing with strong disfavour on the wicked deeds of a sinful people.

Here we turned north and entered the fertile and lovely

vale of Peshawar. The country we passed through awakened within me many old memories of grand days out with the Peshawar Vale Hunt ; for this is the country of the famous P.V.H. where the pace is nearly always fast and those double ditches, known locally as ' grids,' have been the cause of many an awkward tumble to horse and rider.

The road flung itself round corners, crossed the Shah Alam and Nagoman bridges, where miniature fortresses, occupied by men of the Frontier Constabulary, stand sentinel. Then, taking a sharp bend to the left, the fort of Shabkadr came into sight about three miles away. From this distance the khaki-coloured fort bears an absurd resemblance to an immense battleship with its conning tower standing out sharply against the background of the sky.

We passed a group of wild-looking Pathans outside the fort walls who were so busy bargaining with the local tradesmen in the soft, guttural tones of the Pushtu language, that they took not the slightest notice of us. Entering the outer gate, we drove a short way along a dusty road and drew up at the main gate of the upper fort. Here a smart sentry of the Frontier Constabulary, not knowing who we were but presumably believing that it is always wise to run the risk of overestimating the rank of a visitor, presented arms.

We walked through an archway and entered a courtyard where the very unexpectedness of the place astounded us. I had been to Shabkadr before. I had even lived for nearly two months on active service behind its massive walls, but the interior was then dirty and incredibly dusty ; now it was difficult to realise I was in the same place.

We stepped on to a surface carpeted with green turf, bringing quick relief to the eye ; a small rock garden found a place in one corner. Even a pond containing goldfish

had not been left out of the picture. This courtyard possessed the peace of a monastery and the appearance of a cathedral close. Not till we read the inscription on the high red-brick watch tower and, looking towards the ramparts above, saw a sentry very much on the alert, were we reminded that this was indeed the Frontier, with its attendant dangers ever present. The tower was erected by the Royal Munster Fusiliers in memory of the officers and men of that regiment who died of cholera during the Mohmand expedition of 1908.

The garrisons at Shabkadr and of the neighbouring posts along the Mohmand Border are furnished by the Frontier Constabulary, an amazingly smart and efficient force of men, who carry out their duties of watch and ward quietly and unostentatiously under the command of an officer of the Indian Police.

The Officer Commanding the Fort came forward to greet us and, at his suggestion, we climbed on to the roof and from there had a wonderful view of the countryside.

Directly to the west, a stony treeless plain, broken by innumerable small ravines, sweeps towards the foothills of the Mohmand country two miles away, and beyond are higher and again higher hills, jagged in outline and devoid of vegetation—an inhospitable, barren country about which there is something sinister and hostile, but, at the same time, its very desolation holds a wild, romantic charm which is wellnigh impossible to put into words.

I am sorry for the man who, standing for the first time on the ramparts of Shabkadr and looking across that wilderness to the grim hills of the Mohmand country, does not feel a tingling in his blood.

It was on that plain spread out in front that the 13th Bengal Lancers carried out their magnificent charge on

August 9, 1897, against the left flank of the enemy, scattering the tribesmen in all directions and transforming a situation fraught with danger into one of victory. Again, it was there that the 21st Lancers charged the Mohmand hordes on September 5, 1915, incurring many casualties, including their gallant Commanding Officer. On many an occasion have Mohmand tribesmen streamed down in their thousands from those hills into the plain, with banners waving and *dhols* beating, to do battle with the British. Time after time have expeditions been sent into those gaunt hills, where the scarcity of water has tremendously increased the normal discomforts and dangers of frontier warfare. That line of blockhouses, every three or four hundred yards apart, which can be seen stretching across the plain facing the Border from Abazai on the right to Michni on the left, was built during the Mohmand blockade in 1916. The whole scene spread out in front is redolent of hard living and striving, of battle fighting and hostility. If the stones lying out there in the wilderness could speak, they could tell of many a valiant deed performed in days past and gone.

Turning the other way, we looked down on the large village of Shankargarh which nestles for protection under the Eastern wall of the fort. This village is mainly inhabited by Hindu shopkeepers, who carry on a big trade, and, by day, the narrow streets are congested with a motley crowd of shoppers. From our vantage-point the place had the appearance of a large beehive. Fierce-looking tribesmen from across the border jostled their more peaceful brethren of British India with a cheerful arrogance born from centuries of independence.

We walked through the fort and were shown the garden outside. Here, again, the ingenuity of man had transformed a stony waste into a place of serene beauty. Lawns

of springy green turf had been laid and were watered from a small canal near by and flowers of many varieties vied with each other in exotic profusion. An orchard had been planted and the fruit trees were flourishing. Pea-fowl and cranes strutted about the lawns, bringing an atmosphere of peace and comfort, contrasting strangely with the wild panorama spread out towards tribal territory.

'Father' Wood was responsible for all this, I was told, and, on questioning further, I was informed that he was a Mr. Wood of the Indian Police, who commanded at Shabkadr for some years from 1932. I take my hat off to him.

On the road beyond, a group of men were talking. They were tribesmen, by the look of them, and one man was standing slightly apart—a giant of a man with a flaming red beard, who stood head and shoulders above his largely proportioned fellows. He appeared to be a man of some authority, for it was apparent that the others would from time to time appeal to him.

His face and figure were familiar to me, and in a second I recognised him as Anmer, the head of the large Halimzai clan of the Lower Mohmands. I had run across him in 1930 during the troublous days of the Red Shirt movement and unrest across the Border when my regiment was stationed at Shabkadr. Anmer had then been a frequent visitor and he and I had struck up a friendship. A man of strong character and courage, of magnificent physique, and a born leader of men, he had realised that friendship with the British was essential for the protection of his clan and himself.

As he saw me, his face lit up in recognition, and striding towards me, he gripped my hand in his capacious one and I felt almost as if I was held in a vice.

'*Sterremashé*,¹ *sahib*,' he boomed, and there was, as of

¹ May you never be tired.

old, a merry twinkle in his blue eye and a smile about his lips.

'*Kwarmashé*,' I made the stock reply. And then we fell to talking of old times, I in my broken Pushtu and he doing his best to understand, until my wife reminded me that we must be in Peshawar by nightfall.

We had tea in the fort and, saying good-bye to our host and thanking him for all his kindness, we took the road once more.

We had felt the spell of the Frontier, the spell of a country wild and untamable.

The sun was sinking as we drove away from Shabkadr. We travelled along a different road by way of Michni Fort, which is also garrisoned by men of the Frontier Constabulary. Here we swung south, and with the hills of Tirah, the home of the Afridis, on our right we had a straight run towards Peshawar.

As we drove homewards, the light gradually left the sky, the hills took on a colouring of deep blue and an immense silence seemed to descend on the land. Thin veils of mist wrapped themselves around the foothills and lay motionless over the fields.

And ahead of us winked the lights of Peshawar, beckoning us back to safety and the delights of civilisation.

Rajputana.

THE MOCKING-BIRD.

BY PROFESSOR JOHN M. MCBRYDE.

OF all the birds in our country the mocking-bird has the strongest and most interesting personality. He does not walk with the deliberation of the purple grackle, nor does he hop with both feet like our American robin, but with head erect and tail lifted high above the grass, he runs with one foot behind the other so swiftly that the eye can hardly detect the movement of his slender legs. As he darts along the ground in search of insects, pausing now and then to spread out his wings, opening and closing them like fans, he presents a picture of lightness, charm, and joy. In hunting for his food on the lawn he does not put his head on one side, 'as careful robins eye the delver's toil,' but is no less alert to the slightest stir of grub or beetle, and with sudden, swift movement pounces on his prey. Then holding it tightly in his strong beak he thrashes it against the ground to break off the wings or the hard wing cases before swallowing it. Then suddenly with hawk-like movement he shoots into the air and seizes in his bill moth or butterfly or even a dragon-fly in his fleet, erratic flight. His insatiable, omnivorous appetite includes also the big, blundering cicada, whose prolonged, monotonous stridulation is suddenly broken off by a melancholy squeaking buzz, as the mocker seizes him in his powerful beak and carries him away to make a meal of him.

In nesting time he is ever on his guard and, invincible in defence of his young, he swoops down on luckless dog or cat that ventures innocently too near, and drives the animal

to shelter. I have seen a pair of these birds dart at a squirrel on the ground and force him to take refuge in a tree. On one occasion I watched a male viciously attack a grey squirrel travelling awkwardly along an electric-light wire. Unable to stop and fight off his pursuer, the squirrel lost the hold of his hinder feet and struggled in mid-air till he could scramble back on the wire and hobble along to a place of safety among the branches of a tree near by. Once when I passed unwittingly too near his nest the ever-watchful male dashed boldly at me so that his wings brushed my hat. Alert, pugnacious, brave, he may well be called the king of song-birds in our land.

One of my colleagues, however, does not share in my admiration of the bird's dauntless courage in attacking cat or dog at the risk of its own life. Indeed, he resents what appears to be its unreasoning act in swooping down fiercely at his favourite tabby and arousing her out of her peaceful slumbers on the veranda. He finds it even harder to bear the bird's impudence in flying at his head, or its noisy, long-continued expostulations when he approaches too near to its little ones. It all depends not only on whose ox is gored, but on whose cat is bored.

But we all agree that none can match him in song, for he is the Caruso of all the bird families in the United States. Unlike the song of the canary, with its succession of notes, gurgles, and trills running together so as to form almost a single, continuous sound, and different also from the songs of the cardinal, the Carolina wren, and the tufted titmouse, which consist of a brief series of notes repeated three or four times, the mocking-bird's song forms a series of notes or phrases arranged in bars, four or five to the bar, which come pouring out in an amazing, effortless rush of sound, with no slurring, no hesitation or pauses between the bars. And

his song exhibits an extraordinary range and variety in the notes and phrases, for there seems to be no recurrent pattern that he follows. The tempo changes with the season. In the early spring his notes are uttered slowly in tentative fashion from some sheltered branch of a tree, as if they were intended for himself alone ; while in the mating season he perches on the top of the highest chimney and pours forth a torrent of sound that sweeps far over the roofs, not piercing and glittering, like the song of the skylark, but loud, bold, and challenging, with abrupt and surprising changes of mood, now pleading and tender, now harsh and scolding, now frenzied and vituperative. Heard in the stillness of the night when the notes gather volume through echoing from the neighbouring houses, the song is startling and weird in its intensity. Then again, late in August or early in September the mood and manner of his song undergo a remarkable transformation, so that those who hear it for the first time can hardly convince themselves that it is from the same bird. Now, after the ecstasy of the mating time has subsided and after the cares of family life are lifted, he seems to withdraw into himself, for, no longer belligerent, he sits alone on a limb, well hidden among the leaves, and sings in a subdued monotone, the notes running together in a warble and never reaching a high pitch. I do not know of any other bird whose song is so completely transformed in the period between spring and autumn.

The poets have gone into raptures over the songs of the skylark and of the nightingale, and who would dare to say that their praise is not justified ? The mounting song of the skylark with his shower of music from mid-heaven and with his soft diminuendo as he hovers with outstretched wings over his nest on the ground, heard in an English countryside among the poppies and the corn, thrills one

beyond measure. And the intense yearning of the nightingale's song, like a soul in pain or filled with overmastering joy, this too, heard beneath the English oaks on a moonlight night, is an experience one can never forget. But the mocking-bird also has his flight song. I have seen him leaping up into the air from the top of some lofty tree and pouring forth a flood of ecstatic sounds, or floating from one tree to another with an accompaniment of lilting notes that seemed to keep time with his flight. And who in the South has not heard his moonlight song continued for hours during the night and harmonising with the scent of jasmine and honeysuckle? One summer for two months every day a mocking-bird sang near my house in the city, perching himself on the weather-vane across the street, where day and night he kept up his concert with slight intermissions for twelve to fifteen hours at a stretch. In range, variety, spontaneity, passion, and power his song surpasses that of any other bird in our country.

And yet there are those who would make him out a mere ornithological phonograph. Sidney Lanier says, 'He summed the woods in song,' and Wilson Flagg declares that all untaught he can reproduce any sound he may hear :

*Notes bubbling, mellow, sharp and guttural,
Of catbird, cat, or cartwheel, thou can'st utter all.*

Mr. Archibald Rutledge, who writes accurately, charmingly, and lovingly of bird and beast, assures us that one particular mocker with which he was intimately acquainted in the wild imitated the notes of eighty different birds and even picked out the call of a rare migrant passing overhead.

Henry Jerome Stockard, however, takes issue with this view :

*The name thou wearest does thee grievous wrong,
No mimic thou ; thy voice is thine alone.*

From years of study and observation I am convinced that the mocking-bird's powers of mimicry have been much exaggerated and that it has a song of its own, consisting of notes similar to those of other birds but not necessarily filched from them. Though I have detected in the song of a particular bird the notes of kildeer plover, sparrowhawk, cardinal, blue jay, and numerous other birds, these appear to be incidental and not an integral part of his song. The question might naturally suggest itself, Suppose the mocking-bird were in a region where he could hear few notes of other birds, would his song be more limited in range and variety? On the contrary, in New Orleans, where there is little opportunity to hear the rich chorus of the regions farther north, our mocking-birds have as fine a volume of song and as great a variety of notes as have their relatives in Virginia and Tennessee. I have studied the songs of individual birds in different parts of the city and have observed certain notes and phrases common to them all. An individual mocking-bird would, I am sure, have its own song even if it had no other birds to imitate except among its own kind, and its song would not differ greatly from other members of its family having abundant opportunity for imitation.

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CHESTERFIELD AND VOLTAIRE.

BY JULIET GARDNER.

PERIODICALLY, in the history of evolution and progress, there stand out qualities derived from human values, which basically and intensely influence the movements of history : towers of thought erected at the horizon of a waking world, waiting to dominate, unseen. These influences do not entirely comply with the rather clumsy definition of *Zeitgeist*, nor to the more appropriate term 'in advance of the spirit of the age.' In one sense their existence lies in both directions ; and yet the lucid explanation of their being is something which transcends both meanings and directly operates upon the imperious demands of civilisation. The intellectual supremacy of the Renaissance died when a degenerate emphasis was placed upon its cultural development. Inspiration then assumed gross, ungainly proportions of mental unworthiness, and, like a dark fungus growing in the darkness, perished through lack of real illumination. The degree, the proportion of emphasis, the profound or casual illumination, reveal the natures inherent in a true or false conception attached to a civilised emancipation of conduct and ideal. In the same manner, forces in the French Revolution designed to promote universal enlightenment, failed when the balance of power between thought and action drove men to crucify their principles upon an altar of volcanic hatred. For, to replace one autocracy by another is violently to transplant the spiritual intentions of reform, its ancient liberties, its new freedoms, into a country where that which is valuable becomes ignobly uncontrolled.

Imposed conformity is no criterion of conformation or agreement ; but, confessedly, a confiscation of public opinion, public liberty. But this contingency marks the hour, reinforced by that fatal trend in twentieth-century philosophy which impresses conquest on a collective mentality, which invents a mechanised personality endowed with crowd virtues, mass ambitions, a monster with a clockwork soul. The value of individuality holds no place in this system of categorical destruction of principle and man. And that unrelenting factor in modern dictatorship claims a purely negative mission for the individual. It is a doctrine destined to tide the splendour belonging to that consciousness of perfection which unites all independent beings ; a teaching ironically bent upon closing the doors on that vast accessibility of the spirit maintained and mastered by all trusted advocates of freedom for all creatures.

With deep discernment, Ortega Y Gasset in his able book, *The Revolt of the Masses*, defines the essential differences rooted in two classes of human beings. In making this 'most radical division,' the writer affirms that it is clear that whereas one proportion of persons measurably achieves a standard of excellence by the process of 'making great demands on themselves, piling up difficulties and duties,' the other section of humanity demands nothing special of itself, but is content to remain what it is, stone-deaf to the utterance that, without effort, without imposition on self, there is no blameless model. It can be said that the first represents the law which governs all true aristocratic states of mind, endeavour, and emotion : the tradition which has served the purpose through centuries of reflection and conflict. The other—pallid, featureless—solves the problems of existence by instinctively adopting the easiest way and accepting the lazy conclusion. In such a changeless situation,

nobody is conscious that any particular battle or conquest must be made, except it be 'to proclaim the rights of the commonplace, and to impose them wherever it will.'

The immense significance of the eighteenth century lay in the virtue imparted to the value of the individual and to his perfectly accepted estimate. Relations between countries abroad were capable of unending presumptions; but the position of the individual 'in a mass of relations' remains a powerful fact. It has been rightly said that Lord Chesterfield and M. Voltaire are inconceivable in any other century but that which engendered and preserved elegantly, efficiently, gloriously, the quality and the triumph expressed through a reasonable intellectuality—understanding and logic carefully combined. More than this, it fixed an attitude always apprehensive where human conditions were postulated; it demanded, in the name of every nation, universal standards of human dignity as the rightful inheritance of humanity.

In an age famous for the remarkable men and women it produced, Lord Chesterfield and M. Voltaire were celebrities of uncommon order, and both were characteristically unwilling to confuse the demands made on them, by themselves or by life. The spirit dwells eternally in the masterpiece offered up in its most complete form, for eventually it becomes that persistent symbol which reveals the belief that human value possesses deathless importance. Unlike Montaigne, who was satisfied to proclaim that metaphysics is the art of dreaming pleasantly, that it is possible to sleep on doubts until that roving dragon in the mind assumes an appearance of something enchanted—beauty raised up in cloudland on a ridge in space, to be considered apart from the world of feeling—Voltaire's fury of conviction led him to suppose that thought without action as its inevitable end,

is thought without consequence, identity, or living breath. Voltaire contended that to be tormented was not enough. Finer, more finished issues were demanded from the thinker ; the responsibility attached to a creative philosophy must be governed, ordained for salient ends, actively sustained, equal in substance, coherently free.

For the nature of the reformer is the nature of one who perhaps more naturally, more abundantly than any other, perceives the relationship of man to the period in which he lives. He it is who ascertains the *tempo* of the special era, the vital needs of the century. He it is who heightens the ethical pitch underlying all racial conclusions, instincts, desires, traditional possessions, and develops as he goes the dream, exercised by a rational state of things, elevated to its highest level—a positive contribution to the spiritual enlightenment of the inhabitants of this earth. Cruelty, to Voltaire, was the death of wisdom and progress, as opposed to the inherent reason of life guided to harmonious fulfilment. With that piercing power of the imagination—‘ the great investment of moral good ’ laid down by Shelley, which possesses penetrative insight into the deep places of thought—he felt a fiery compassion for all those for whom the world feels no special response but who are rendered immobile, subordinate, through the dictates of prejudice, superstition, tyrannical creeds, fashioned to widen the gulf existing between all living creatures and a successful humanity. The basis of his belief lay in his own words : ‘ The discovery of what is true and the practice of what is good are the two most important objects of philosophy.’ In his noble and scholarly biography John Morley wrote that ‘ to Voltaire, reason and humanity were but a single word, and love of truth and passion but one emotion.’ He possessed an inner balance of mind and heart, the faculty of intense feeling

translated into ideas organically, yet invisibly, related to the world of human affinities, while the feeling of unity which he experienced with mankind strengthened, but did not modify, his own personality.

The Church took no part in the illumination, the preparation of Europe in the eighteenth century for the great change of rhythm which brought freedom to the people. This outer and inner manifestation against authority, and the widening of horizons physical and mental, emerged from other and more fruitful sources than those measured by State or Ecclesiastical dominion. Wealth and its dependence did not participate in the appeal for religious tolerance. But in a generation it is sometimes given for a great mind to voice the sufferings of a people through the deliberate utterance of the will in the field of constructive achievement. And suffering, to Voltaire, the mitigation of suffering, was of supreme importance. Since the beginning of time no reformer has been more conscious that a contented people, to be centralised in progress, prosper only when happy. Contentment is the negative side of prosperity, and happiness that restorative region where man's spirit actively benefits prosperity. This does not imply centuries of countless ease. It merely indicates that, to most human beings, liberty inculcates practical social methods and defines the worldly environment. At an epoch when a leisured diligence was the complement generally of a proud disinterested rationalism, Voltaire's rational outlook was devised for the common good. And it can be believed that, had it been necessary for him to settle any doubts that might prevail as to the various merits of the potential argument embodied in all sorrow, or in the genius which classically aspires to intellectual heights in literature, metaphysics, the arts (pre-eminently provinces in which Voltaire excelled), Voltaire,

like Leonardo da Vinci, would have replied that the usefulness of a manner of living can only be based on understanding 'out of which springs a true and great love' for those who endure, who are helpless, who only exist, for those wanderers who grope their way, imperceptible figures, along roads lost in obscurity.

Only those who are cold and unsympathetic can remain unmoved by his words uttered during that period when he worked resolutely, continuously, to bring justice to the Calas family. He said: 'During that time not a smile escaped me without my reproaching myself for it, as for a crime.' Voltaire, unlike many of his critics, did not build his cases out of the vaporous, the indistinct framings of fancy. Life was 'actuality' to him; its many facets, happy and unhappy, contained the truth which nothing can disarm and which is perpetually put on record for the world to see, to face. He believed in a remedy, in a state of things, 'where it is the privilege of man to write what he thinks,' to quote Pococurante in *Candide*. He was not a 'sensationalist,' as some of his critics would have one believe, but a thinker who shaped his existence, his faith, the heat of a fearless energy, on a stable foundation wherever his fellow-men, their misery and their redemption, were concerned. 'Conduct,' wrote Edward Clodd, 'is everything, because duty never lapses.' And duty to his King, his country, his God, represented to Voltaire the greatest moral good—an attitude which involved the whole, as distinct from the sinister application employed by the Jesuits:

'Je ne reconnais point a cette indigne image
Le dieu que je dois adorer;
Je croirais le dishonorer
Par une telle insulte et par tel hommage.'

The admission and the cure he considered were bound with

the same pledges—to eradicate the poison of prejudice, to free man through the power of his own civilised intelligence, an aspiration, grave and consequential, to be prophetically fulfilled nearly two centuries later in matters relating to the constitutional history of political government in most countries. It may be said that the vote was the natural sequence of the liberalism of the eighteenth century to a sharper extent than was the violent pull of later nineteenth-century industrialism, with its fated eruptive forces and hold upon national life, the gradual mastery it attained and all the attendant complications which are shared as a common background by the world to-day.

The most distinguished of his admirers have regarded, in the light of a humiliating weakness, the manner in which Voltaire dealt with lesser minds, those who roused his ire and pertinacity, and the dreary quarrels that ensued. But too much meditation sometimes attaches complication where there is none, and this is especially true when one contemplates genius. A sense of proportion is seldom envisaged or used at all effectively around the characters, the lives of great men. Errors are imputed, and the thing which presents itself, not the deeper charity at the back of the superficial picture, is treated as a serious verity. Only the elements, the structure, the ascent, the pain it implied in his life to preserve the ideal from harm, can be esteemed as impersonal testimony of the man as he really proved himself to be. The principle of indignation passes through a whole order of differences. And the indignation of Voltaire was excited for a reason which touches others; injustice, its primary proposition, was to him an emotional, mental, and moral evil. Of the majority of human beings it may be said that indignation is a species of pride surprised within, like the reflection in some unfaithful mirror, where the

expression of self is impregnated with an unlovely tolerance. On the occasions when he was personally attacked, Voltaire always forgave.

Definition of purpose, in the lives of Lord Chesterfield and M. Voltaire, is conspicuous because of a problem which confronted them both as individuals. In the broadest sense, the knowledge and authority which were theirs were assembled, crowded, under the arch of this particular experience. For the presence of a conflict in a life establishes contact with the unusual, with that which is unhurried but has a pressing proximity, a kind of uneasy contagion. And it is matter for interesting speculation that Voltaire's conflict, directed towards the world, was a different kind of despair from the struggle, a fiercely brooding loneliness, which consumed Lord Chesterfield within the precincts, closely guarded though it was from other men, of a secret solitude. The collision with him rested on that inner counsel where confessor and confessional are one. So little haphazard is its course, so often prolonged and lingering until death; unmeasured, immovable guest of ghostly parentage and passionate abandonment to that to which it clings.

Dr. Bernard Bosanquet has said that the 'limitation of every self bears no relation to anything but its power.' And it is to that nature, the nature of power, that one ascribes the shallow or solemn resource which slowly restricts and strangles, or which can be apprehended over the wastes of a limitless sea. Unlike Voltaire, Lord Chesterfield retreated from certain fountains of inspiration which he possessed in common with the man of whom he wrote that there 'is nobody to equal him for the brilliant.' But a study, or even a feeble commentary, is necessarily complex when choice and aim vary. Nevertheless, it was more than an incident that these two individuals, unlike on the surface,

bore further semblance one to the other. There flowed beneath the steady stream of traditional behaviour (that symbol lasting through the ages, trophy of innumerable 'conquests' in the past which Ortega Y Gasset contends are the real privileges of nobility) the stronger brightness of an inward significance. It is on these points that language and thought mingled; clarity, exposition, precision, literary merit, and, what is most important, the faculty to focus on some fundamental assurance, definitely show a similar attitude towards emancipation and progress. In one of his letters to his son, Lord Chesterfield mentions that Lord Bolingbroke had taught him to read history, but that Voltaire had taught him 'how history should be written.' And, again, when he speaks of Voltaire's *de l'Esprit Humain*, he makes this profound remark: 'I am provoked at the contempt which most historians show for humanity in general; one would think by them that the whole human species consisted but of about a hundred and fifty people, called and dignified (commonly very undeservedly, too) by the titles of Emperors, Kings, Popes, Generals, and Ministers.'

One is struck, on reading Lord Chesterfield's *Letters* to his son, by the fact that the writer reveals more of himself than of the beloved child to whom these writings were sent. At moments one is haunted by the curious inference that the correspondence is incalculably more vivid for the possible assumption that Lord Chesterfield wrote some of the letters to himself. The portrait of the son, roughly aspected, is clear but not entirely tangible. It is obvious that he was an awkward, unheroic, graceless person, substantially unqualified to be of the same race, to belong to that calibre of mind and spirit which had placed him on equal physical terms with his father. The contrast is even formidable, grotesque. And then the description ends on the saddest

note, for Lord Chesterfield's genius was wasted in this, to him, principal concern. He was unable to convince his son (if son he really was and not a massive fabrication of which Lord Chesterfield was made the victim) that the respect for good breeding which permeates the whole system of aristocratic endeavour is, to the aristocrat, a purely elementary form of conduct and consideration. The toil of mind, in intention and pronouncement, the vigorous reminder of spirit and letter constantly betrayed by repetition, make it doubly plain that all these affairs were of no interest whatever to Philip Stanhope, the son. On the contrary, it can be believed that, to him, life was relegated to the poorest reconciliations of prospect and vision, that he looked down from the summit with an almost myopic conception of duty to society, to the world. Philip Stanhope is not dimly true to type: he is consistently unreal, and this consistency, never passing, never irrelevant, clothes his personality. But, in marriage, he found his level and peace. Lord Chesterfield's labours were in vain. The cloudless reality for which he strove blossomed only in the imagination, precluded for ever from warmer articulation. The event for which he worked and hoped never transpired; he never saw 'his own youth revived' in his child. A legacy of bitterness remained the ultimate memory, depths of irony which Lord Chesterfield must have grimly appreciated. His silence about that tragic episode surrounds him in the autumn of life with a noble dignity. Outwardly, in the course of daily events, in daily relationships, he did not seem to be interested in the existence of a major human problem (pool of unquiet waters which so engrossed Voltaire), yet it is obvious that his judgment about the things of permanent value was secure. Inwardly, the comparison was properly balanced. And this discriminating tone under-

lies everything, tracing the pensive note, is at its highest when least expected. His admiration for the brilliant Lord Bolingbroke did not blind him to the extraordinary honesty, the goodness of Lord Scarborough's character, which made him in an era heartless and sceptical a subject for compassion. It is of this friend that he writes : ' The most secret movements of his soul were, without disguise, communicated to me only ; . . . I owed this small tribute to justice, such as it is, to the memory of the best man I ever knew, and of the dearest friend I ever had.' These beautiful words speak for themselves.

In spite of many extrinsic discrepancies, it is not astonishing to find that even a tentative survey, faintly outlined as it is, establishes the strong resemblance, rapport of idea, of plan, that enveloped from start to finish the French philosopher and the English leader. But a spontaneous movement of the intellect towards a larger manifestation cannot be discovered in the son's point of view. Quite apart from Lord Chesterfield's worldly rationalism, the fact that he was representative of his class to a superior degree ; moreover, that he maintained in his own personality ' a certain imperishable human type ' (to quote Dr. Shellabarger, in his wonderfully skilful treatment) ; separate from all these details—blended, inhibited, or enhancing—a distinctive quality endures, and that is the ability which makes for individuality, a volition beyond the conventional pattern, a force which demolishes the commonplace.

In Ireland, during his appointment as Lord-Lieutenant, he is seen at his best. It is when he is alone, away from the usual setting, his hand on the helm of State, in solitary control of a difficult situation, that the real man discloses himself. His administration of that country is without precedent. Instructive, illuminating, humane, it has never been sur-

passed. Such are the strange decrees of fate that he was permitted to put into practice theories of political rights and duties which were ever denied Voltaire, who was never in a position to rule in the world of statesmanship in any administrative capacity.

The present time admits of no defence. Insidiously, the weighty questions of moment common to all keep no faith with that which is straightforward or efficacious. Chaotic conditions are everyday history. But the solution, if one can be advanced, appears to live far away from the natural supports compatible with modern acceptance. A kind of vulgar glamour is spread over chapter and verse; over protestation, belief, and attainment. Style gives up the ghost to specialisation; rather shoddy virtuosity replaces the creation of genius; mass productions invade mental and scientific atmospheres, reducing the epoch-making discovery, its lasting influence, to a shadowy perception. Everywhere there is evidence of an unconscious as well as a deliberate absorption of quantity in preference to quality. Imitation, coarsely contained, is the controlling arbiter, and artificiality the spokesman who prevents development, and blocks the highway for deliverance.

There is something inhuman about the civilisation which views on the one side the possible law of Universal Brotherhood and the Christian precept of kindness to our humbler brethren, and, on the other, a merciless destruction of man and the commercial exploitation of animals too helpless to shift their burden. It may be a little consolation to remember that the minority outlive the multitude, although it is for the sake of the multitude that the minority exist. But, as regards an immediate salvation, it does not help at all.

Recently in a luminous article Dr. L. P. Jacks remarks that the chief thing at fault in the world to-day is tied up with an

essential fabric of impulse and desire. The lack, which must in the main frustrate or retard co-operation along avenues of spiritual development, typifies 'the inadequate quality of human material of the men and women who form the living substance of society.' Much is remitted contemporary version for the cry raised that this generation is sick with disillusionment. And therefore nothing more can be said. But may not the word disillusionment really portray internal evidence of quite another character? Resentment, a sullen covering, may perhaps more candidly explain the experience and illustrate the specific effort used nowadays against responsibility and its acceptance. It is plain that imagination, which makes for freedom, and courage to cultivate and prolong the adventure whether it be dull or lighted is at a premium. And the values of individuality—'the personality expanded' to its richest stretch objectified in some external way—sleep in a twilight forest of the soul. But for M. Voltaire there never was a motionless crepuscule of repose lived away from life, for life to him meant unrelenting labour. Moreover, he possessed a gift unusual to reformers, and that gift was wit and a great sense of humour. Whatever jejune criticism may be levelled at Lord Chesterfield, it may be said with absolute truth that his was a sincere expression in thought and life. In those matters which continually persevere beneath the changing masks of succeeding cultural environments his personal honour and intellectual integrity remain unimpugned.

In this age progress is possible under various guises; but freedom and wisdom can only be approached as a mean to invoking the forces of a real civilisation through the services rendered by a humanely educated people.

ALTAMIRA.

BY WALTER S. ROWNTREE.

LIKE a red splash on the undulating green downs of Cantabria stands the little old-world town of Santillana del Mar, famous as the reputed birthplace of Gil Blas. It lies in the Basque country, the north-east corner of Spain, whose inhabitants are of an alien race, differing in speech and aspect from all other European peoples. Probably they are a surviving remnant from an older and quite prehistoric population. The streets of Santillana are narrow and tortuous and have a deserted air. Few visitors reach the little town other than the occasional student whose objective is the treasure house of which Santillana literally holds the key. That treasure house is the cave of Altamira; to visit which a permit and a guide must be obtained from officialdom in the town. A half-hour's walk over the downs, away from all human habitations, leads to the cave, outwardly a mere hole in the hillside, now closed by a locked iron gate. The cave was accidentally discovered in 1868. The entrance had become closed and overgrown in prehistoric times, and had so remained. A further and more dramatic discovery was to follow, a few years later.

The cave runs down in zigzag fashion for some 300 yards and is of course completely dark. Some little distance down, a grotto opens on the left, forming a sort of diverticulum of the main corridor. It was here that in 1879 a startling discovery was made—and made by a little girl. A Spanish gentleman, Don Marcelino de Sautuola, was engaged in making scientific investigations, his attention being directed

to the floor of the cave. His little daughter, who had accompanied him, was probably rather bored by these proceedings, and was wandering aimlessly round amongst the rocky boulders with which the floor is strewn, peering here and there by the light of the lantern they had brought. Suddenly her father was startled, and not a little mystified, by a childish cry of 'Toros ! Toros !' It was not until he raised his eyes to the roof that enlightenment came. And then—what a revelation ! For the lantern revealed a glorious painted fresco of animals, some of which have not existed in that part of Europe since Palæolithic times. And there to-day, half a century later, the fresco still stands, in much of the vividness with which it was painted something in tens of thousands of years ago. Every care is now taken to protect it from vandalism and from the effects of the outer air. Hence the locked gate and an inner wall partially separating off that portion of the cave.

The fresco contains more than thirty animal figures, not actually life-size but quite large—from three or four to seven feet long, and *painted in colour*. The colours consist of varying shades of red, brown, yellow and orange, with black and white. Mineral earths—kaolin, oxides of iron and manganese—with carbonaceous matter, were the materials used. In most cases the effect is polychrome, though figures done in black alone are found elsewhere in the cave. There is no attempt at picture-making in the sense of grouping. But each individual stands out as a life-like figure, wonderfully true ; and in many cases the very spirit and movement of the animal have been caught. The animals are alive ! Those represented in the great fresco, which is fourteen metres long by four or five metres wide, include (1) Bison, then a common animal in Spain, but now long extinct in Europe, except in one small remote region ; (2) Wild Horse,

no longer found anywhere near Spain ; (3) Wild Boar ; (4) both Stag and Hind of the Red Deer ; and possibly others. Farther down in the cave are figures of other animals, indicated if not actually painted. And in certain other caves, since the great discovery at Altamira, mural paintings have been found of various creatures, including even the Woolly Rhinoceros and the Mammoth, both of which are so closely identified with the Ice Age. But Altamira stands out as the scene of the original discovery, and as, in some respects at least, the most wonderful example of prehistoric art. As one stands there, under that marvellous frescoed ceiling, it is with a feeling of awe and reverence, as in the temple of a great and long-vanished race ; and one asks oneself, ‘ *Who* were these wonderful artists ? ’ ‘ *When* did they do this work ? ’ ‘ *How* did they do it, in the darkness ? ’ ‘ *Why* did they do it ? ’ And finally, ‘ *What* became of them ? ’

By the careful comparative study of many converging lines of evidence, these questions have in part been answered, but only in part. We are certain that this polychrome mural decoration is to be referred to the Cromagnon race and to the culture known as Magdalenian ; and that the epoch was that sometimes distinguished as the Reindeer Period, towards the end of the Old Stone Age, and about the close of the Great Ice Age—a period the close of which is variously estimated as from 15,000 to 25,000 years ago. Those paintings of Altamira were already inconceivably ancient when the first Pharaoh ruled in Egypt. As to how the artists worked, it can only be said here that we have found some of the materials and implements used : for example, their rough stone lamps, their pigments, and bones which had respectively served the purposes of palette and pigment-tube.

The motive and purpose of this cave-art remains a mystery.

Some authorities incline to the view that it was just 'Art for Art's sake'; the welling up and outflow of a great artistic impulse. And it must be conceded that the excellence of the work lends support to that view. For these are by no means childish efforts, such as might be expected from a savage people. MM. Cartailhac and Breuil, after an exhaustive study of the subject, summarise their conclusions as follows: 'l'œuvre la plus parfaite que nous puissions actuellement citer de ses époques reculées, et qui place les vieux peintres des âges glyptiques, bien au dessus les animaliers de toutes civilisations de l'Ouest classique, et de la Grèce, rien n'égale la rigueur du tracé, l'habileté et le fondu des nuances rouges, brunes et jaunes qui se melangent et se graduent en mille demi-teintes.' The polychromes of the ceiling of Altamira, it has been said, rank in the crude art of Palæolithic times much as the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel does in modern art. Another view of the meaning and motive of the mural painting imports into it the idea of magic—something to give the individual or the tribe success in the chase. Such ideas are not unknown amongst living races; and in support of this theory it may be mentioned that the animals depicted are chiefly those which would be most valued and desired by the hunter of those days. It may well be that both motives existed and played their part.

Finally, 'What became of these people?' Resemblances have been traced and parallels drawn between them and certain existing races, notably the Esquimaux on the one hand, and the Bushmen on the other. Strong, if not convincing, arguments can be adduced in each case; and it may be that some obscure relationship exists in one direction or the other. The people too in certain sheltered and restricted valleys in South Europe have been pointed to as

probable remnants of that great vanished race. But as time goes on it seems to become more and more clear that, at any rate in the main, that splendid branch of the human tree disappeared, being not improbably wiped out by the more highly organised, though possibly individually inferior, Neolithic peoples who were establishing themselves in the same regions. One of the many tragedies of the ancient world. But some of their work still speaks !

OH BRAVE NEW WORLD.

Oh Brave New World !

*Born in the hell of war, the roar of guns—
Your ransom price the blood of soldier sons,
A million broken hearts and broken lives,
Of childless mothers and of widowed wives—
All gods destroyed, all standards earthward hurled !
This was your legacy : Oh Brave New World.*

Oh Brave New World !

*For you no careless youth, no frail illusion :
Instead, a world, grief-driven, in confusion ;
Dancing and tears combined in mad extremes ;
No creeds, and few ideals,—no lovely dreams !
The Serpent round the Tree, in waiting, curled—
And none to stay your hand ! Oh Brave New World.*

Oh Brave New World !

*Beneath the healing hand of Time and Years,
From out the mass of loves and hates and fears—
Faint Hope awoke, to build the world again ;
To strive for Peace ! And shall this be in vain ?
Yet now War stands in wait—grim flag unfurled !
What will your answer be ? Oh Brave New World !*

GWEN ROWLAND.

THE ACHILLES DE MILO.

BY JONATHAN PITCH.

THE voice that filled the Old England Bar at Malta and wafted across the Grand Harbour was no ordinary voice. Plentiful moistening and use had mellowed it to a rich precision. It smacked of a thirst now rarely met with ; while inviting argument it carried an anticipatory threat in its cadence ; it was a voice that had never known defeat, that recognised no master. It belonged to Stoker Deverall, a small wrinkled man, who, after twenty years in the Navy, had successfully avoided the ignominy of wearing even one good-conduct badge for more than three months at a time, the one man known and respected by every policeman in Malta.

Of the five men savouring the voice, only two Able-seamen were strictly entitled to it by virtue of being at Stoker Deverall's table, and supplying the voice with refreshment, but there was nothing mean and calculating about it. It was there for those who wanted it and those who did not ; it could be taken but not left. The placid-faced Marine, eating his supper of egg and chips, the huge cook, gazing into his beer mug with a puzzled frown, and the awe-struck Maltese barman all had their portion.

' Cock ship are you ? ' it was asking. ' Well, don't let that bust your cap-ribbon. I *could* tell you a story about a cock ship. It happened on this station, just over ten years ago now—before you knew the difference between a lemonade and a drink, and when you believed your old lady when she said a cup of tea was the best thing for a thirst,'

The taller of the Able-seamen made a humbly apologetic noise, and called for three glasses of beer. Opening his mouth for about one-fifth of a second, and lowering the half-empty beaker to the table, Stoker Deverall continued.

‘Yes, in nineteen twenty-four. I was in the *Leopard*, the happiest and smartest ship there ever was. And clean ! Why, if a fly breathed on the paintwork he left a deep stain ! Only we didn’t have flies on board. There was no flies on us, but there *was* a fly in our ointment so to speak, and it was in the ointment of every ship on the station bar one—the *Incredible*—and that ain’t so surprising, because *she* was the fly.

‘Now I’m not the man to grudge a ship a bit o’ luck, but there’s reason in all things, and if I was to say the *Incredible* was lucky, I’d be telling you an untruth. No, she didn’t just have luck. She monopolised the market as the saying goes. The crew put a slice in with every shell they fired, and won every gunnery competition invented ; they was given wads of it in their pay envelopes, and an *Incredible* man only had to back a horse for it to win on stilts ; I expect they even sprinkled their tiddleywinks with it. Anyhow, they won every Fleet trophy there was except one—the boxing statue. And we had that.

‘We was all greatly attached to that statue. You see, the *Leopard* had held it for four years and we looked upon it as part complement so to speak. It had its own billet in the middle of the Quarter-deck, and one hand was told off to valet it. A bullneck. Though I don’t hold with Royal Marines as such, I’ve got to admit that this one appreciated the honour of his position.

‘There was three foot six inches of that statue, and there weren’t a speck nor flaw on it. We was particularly proud of his teeth. He had his own toothbrush supplied him every

week by the Pusser, and the polish was so rare that the Commander used to keep it under his pillow. The dagos who came on board with their mouths flashing gold used to take one look at 'Orace—that was his name—and turn all pale. They couldn't stand his competition. In a manner of speaking, his teeth took the gilt off their gingerbread, and they lost interest in life after seeing him.

'And wherever we went we took 'Orace with us. He'd come along to give us a chuckup at football matches; he always had the centre of the floor at our dances, though we dressed him up in a cap-ribbon on such occasions—out of respect to the ladies; and during every shoot he'd doss down in one of the turrets. Yes, everybody in the *Leopard*, from the Captain down to the Jaunty—and you can't get no lower than that—loved 'Orace like a brother. Of course he was too good-looking to be related to anyone in that packet, but that's how we felt towards him.

'So you can imagine the excitement there was when the Boxing Competition came to be held at Syra, which is as near approaching a metropolis as anything in them Greek islands. That is to say it has more than one pub; to be truthful, it has twelve. And in each of the twelve the forthcoming boxing was discussed with some heat.'

The voice paused in pleasing reflection for a moment and finished its beer.

'Yes, considerable heat, you might say. In one sense of the word, you see, the Fleet was divided. They all *wanted* us to win, but a large party was afraid we wouldn't. And as for the *Incredible* men, there was no holding them. They used to walk about in groups—they had to do that—offering ten to one against us. They had a sort of throne already built on their Quarter-deck for 'Orace. He was to be given the place of honour among the fifty or sixty mugs they had.

And what's worse of all, they even changed his name. " 'Orace is all right for a Pompey ship," they said, but they coming from Chatham wanted something more refined. They called him *Achilles* ! Now Achilles is all right for a ship, I suppose, but the idea of our 'Orace suffering under a foreign name like that was wicked mental agony. It was carrying personal spite too far, we held. After all, what had 'Orace himself done to them ? But then, of course, they was Chatham.

' On the day of the Competition, 'Orace was done up a treat. If it weren't for the fact that bullnecks can't have souls—ex officio, as the saying is—I'd tell you that that Royal Marine put his heart and soul into the job. 'Orace shone as he'd never shone before, and, incidentally, has never shone since. He was inspected like a bad pea, but no one could find *nothing* wrong with him. The Pusser brought the best toothbrush in his stores along himself, and stood watching 'Orace having his teeth cleaned. He looked sort of wistful ; like as if he had a premonition.

' So 'Orace was taken over to the flagship, where the boxing was to be held, and we all said good-bye to him. Actually we said oreevah, as we hoped to see him back on board again that night.'

Stoker Deverall paused while the new glass of beer was placed before him. He gazed round the bar. His two companions showed satisfactory intentness ; the large cook bulked a little larger, for he had moved several tables nearer, and was gazing at Deverall with a rapt, thoughtful expression ; the Marine was staring with his egg-shrouded fork held in mid-air. Deverall was satisfied. To keep a Royal Marine and a fried egg apart represents the height of man's conquest over Nature.

' But we didn't, because we lost the competition. You

could feel the ship go all sort of numb. 'Orace was gone. In fact 'Orace was no more as the *Incredible* took particular care to point out. The statue was put in their launch, and they manned every boat they had, and lay off just by us, shouting, "Ach ! Ach ! Ach ! Achilles !" We was too stunned to do anything. We just stood and watched them. The poor bullneck was half in tears. Not only had he lost 'Orace, but a nice quiet job had gone with him, you see. In the end they grew tired and took the statue back with them. We could see him looking lonely on their Quarter-deck. It was more than flesh and blood could stand.

'I shall pass over what happened that night, beyond mentioning that the blokes who kept the middle in the *Incredible* was addicted to their cocoa, and spent most of the night drinking it in the Quartermaster's lobby ; and that anyone looking for our skiff at three a.m. at the boom wouldn't have found it ; nor would they have found Marine Oakroyd, Petty Officer Smith, nor Stoker First Class Deverall, no good-conduct badges. Our Officer of the Watch—he's Captain of the *Whirlwind* now—was going on his rounds at the time. He was most particular to point that out to me afterwards. A fortunate coincidence you might call it, and on the other hand you might not.

'When the hands fell in next morning in the *Incredible*, the pedestal was there but 'Orace was gone. You could almost hear the groan all over the harbour. Of course, there was the devil to pay, but no one had heard or seen anything, so the only people they could wreak their wrath on, so to speak, was those who had happened to be on watch during the night in question. The "*Theft*"—they called it that, mark you—was reported to the C.-in-C., and signals was buzzing all round the Fleet. Terrible threats was made,

but 'Orace still laid low. Very low, as it was, for he was hidden underneath some oakum in the Bosun's store.

'Yes, there he was all cosy in his oakum. And he might still have been there had not the Captain gone rounds the very day we dropped anchor at Milo, and had the Captain not made a joke to the Commander about picking oakum—*joke*—and he had not put his hand in the heap and played about with it. Petty Officer Smith, who had put 'Orace there, was on tenterhooks, as they calls them, and when the Captain suddenly said "'Ullo ! What's this ?" he told me he felt like hanging himself there and then on the six-inch hemp that was all handy. But he had no time, for the Captain said to him :

"Petty Officer Smith, is you in charge of this store ?"

"Yes, sir," said Smith, despondent.

'The Captain looked at him hard. "There's a foreign body in your oakum," he said. "It's got to be gone by next Saturday. Is that clear ?"

"Aye aye, sir !" said Smith. "And thank you, sir."

'The Captain turned to the Commander and whispered something, and soon there was a chuckle all down the line, right to the boy bugler.

"Mind you don't forget," he said. "Gone. Right out of my ship." And with a grim sort of nod he passed on.

'It weren't long before the news of 'Orace's comeback was all over the ship, and we had a meeting about it on the forecastle, that afternoon being make and mend. You see, the Captain had placed us in the horns of a dilemma. Here we was at Milo with the whole fleet, and here was 'Orace on draft, so to speak. What was we to do with him ? One thing was certain. We wasn't going to put him back on the *Incredible's* Quarter-deck, all sort of tame and meek.

‘Well, we argued the point for some time, but got no forrider till the Chief Writer, who had honoured us with his presence, suddenly said : “Here, what’s Milo famous for ?”

‘We all said what we thought of Milo, and wondered how such a blistering rock could be famous, but he shouted in that superior tone of voice all Chief Writers is born with : “What about the Venus de Milo ?” Of course we had all seen pictures of the young lady, but we didn’t see what she had to do with ‘Orace, and we said so.

‘The Venus de Milo, we was told in what was supposed to be a sarcastic way, was the statue of Venus found at Milo. That hadn’t occurred to me before, and I began to see what was at the back of that Scribe’s dishonest mind. “Aint the Venus de Milo the most famous statue in the world ?” he asked. “And why shouldn’t there be some more here ? And suppose the rumour got round that there was another one ? Wouldn’t everyone be after it, trying to make his fortune ?”

‘There was a pause while his remarks sunk in through the thick skull-bones, which is the pride and glory of the Royal Corps, then the whole mob began to argue at once. Coming from a Chief Writer, an idea like that was nothing short of a miracle, and I said so. It took some of the smile off his face for a bit, but popular acclaim, so to speak, soon put it back. As a matter of fact, he never lost that superior smile for the rest of the commission, and Chief Writers being what they are, he has probably still got it. But there was lots of details to be settled, and we began to chew the rag in earnest.’

A heavy crash echoed through the bar as the fat cook rose from his table, and sat by the one next to Deverall, who paused to drain his third glass of beer. The five listeners

waited intently for him to begin again, while the bells of the ships in the harbour struck half-past ten.

'The rumour had to be arranged so as that the *Incredible* heard it but didn't know who started it, because if they heard we was concerned that would set them trying to think. Then we had to bury 'Orace somewhere on the quiet. The only thing we decided before tea that afternoon was to send out an S.O.S. to the *Panther*. She was our chummy ship, you see. We commissioned the same week in Pompey, and had been together more or less ever since. We knew the "pants" would give us a helping hand, as the boy scouts say.

'Most of the lads went ashore on Sunday on a big picnic that the sky pilot got up. That suited us in a way, because we was able to hold a more select meeting, and the fewer hands who knew the details, the better. There was the Chief Writer, a Tiffy, two Chippies, P.O. Smith, three Unable Seamen, the bullneck, and me, together with a deputation from the *Panther*. We all sat forward of "A" Turret with a tin of ticklers, and started the discussion.

'I won't repeat everything that was said, because talking makes me thirsty, and I want to be in my hammock by six bells, but I'll just give you a resoomiee. The *Panther* ran a ship's magazine, and had a nice little printing press on board. One of the printers was in the deputation, and he said he thought he could make some things that would look like cuttings from the *Hampshire Telegraph* easy enough to fool any Chatham cockney. The Chief Writer, who had become Chairman by act of God, so to speak, wrote the words, he being a literary gent by virtue of his office. They was nearly a column long so that I can't remember them, but the headings was: "Further Discoveries in Milo," then in smaller print, "Appeal to H.M. Ships to Co-operate." I

hates giving a Scribe credit for anything, but that last bit looked extra genuine. I still remembers the beginning of the first sentence : "Consequent on the recent expedition of the British Archæological Society to Milo, it has been definitely established . . ." and the gist of the rest was this :

'The expedition had been to Milo, but had had to leave through lack of funds. But while they was there, they had made several discoveries, and since they left, one of these had given them proof that a statue of 'Ermes was to be found in a certain position, which was given with considerable accuracy. It took Smith a long time to work out the most blistering spot in that frying-pan of an island. They was anxious that the statue should be found by British hands, and asked any ships of H.M. Navy that might call at Milo to dig it up for them. They hinted that besides glory, there was considerable pecuniary advantage going, as the saying is.

'Saying it as I does, all this sounds pretty thin, but you should have read that cutting ! There couldn't have been much wrong with it, because the "Incredibles" swallowed it lock, stock, and barrel. Copies was got over to them in a variety of ways, and other ships as well, in case they smelt a rat. In fact, the buzz was soon all round the fleet, but so careful had we been, that no one traced it to us. Funniest thing of all was that the *Incredible* did most of the spreading, boasting that they would get that there statue, and so wipe out the ignomony of 'Orace's loss. Then we had to pretend to be interested, and issued what the papers call a communique to the effect that the statue was as good as ours. Soon half the fleet was vowing to get the statue.

'On Friday a party of us landed on the quiet dressed in football gear, and with a big sports bag. Once out of sight of the multitude, we committed 'Orace to the deep. Speaking figuratively that is, only he was deep all right, and at

the top of a hill. It was hard work, but it was worth it when we thought of the *Incredible* having to reap in the heat of the day what we had sown in the cool of the evening, as the Bible says.

'No leave was given on Saturday, which was fortunate, as that gave the sun a chance to harden up the earth we had dug. And on Sunday forenoon great preparations was being made in about twenty ships. We was chuckling to ourselves thinking of the rush there would be when liberty-men landed at thirteen fifteen, but we was all half-afraid that some party might get there before the *Incredible*.

'But at twelve ten precisely these fears was laid to rest. The *Incredible* always called herself a smart ship, but that day she was just a little too smart. A picnic party set off from her boom a full hour before libertymen was due to land. Two cutters full, and they made no effort to conceal what they was after. In fact, they advertised it with mocking shouts. They came in for some pretty bitter comment as they passed other ships, and we had to make a special noise, of course.

'At thirteen thirty there was at least five hundred ratings on the pier, and a good few officers as well. I expect the flunkies had spread the news in the Wardrooms. The whole party made for the hill, some taking digging implements with them, in case the *Incredible* had missed the spot. One or two of us took shovels, just for the sake of appearances like, and we also had a vague feeling we *might* be needing them—but not for digging.

'It was a steep and rocky hill we had chosen, and a long climb in the blazing sun. We got there all pouring with sweat, and found the *Incredible* already encamped. They had waited for us to arrive before they started work, and was comparatively cool and fresh. If it weren't for that and

the officers present, some of the crowd might have tried to chuck them down the hill, they was that upset over the trick the *Incredible* had played, getting off an hour ahead. As it was, they all chose the most comfortable billets they could, and sat down to watch, hoping against hope that there would be nothing there after all. You see there was no point their digging elsewhere—the fatal spot was already covered by “Incredibles.”

‘Well, you know what Greece is like on an August afternoon, so you can guess what the diggers looked like, after just ten minutes. They were visibly dissolving before our eyes, and soon they was groaning and grunting like a motor-cutter’s engine. But they couldn’t stop for a standeasy. Their pride wouldn’t let them with all us looking on, and the ironical cheers and so forth spurred them a bit. Then one of them, a little chap, who was redder than hot coke, stumbled over his spade and fainted. Chatham, of course. They lugged him to one side, and went on with the job. Soon another one chucked his hand in.

‘Naturally, this was milk and honey to the onlookers. Besides cheering and offering the sufferers bottles of beer, they began to make bets as to who would be next to go. I ought to have mentioned that the spot where ’Orace lied was about ten yards square, and as they started the wrong end, they had to dig all that up before gaining their objective.

‘One by one, they dropped out, and when the patch was about three-quarters dug, there was only three left. I was too far away myself to make out any details, but two was long and thin, and the other huge and fat. I backed the fat one to hang out longest—he looked used to the heat—and on the results of my judgment I won a quid.

‘Well, beer bottles was frothing all round when two of them hit something with their shovels, and began to dig

even harder than before. It was agony to watch them. But after twenty minutes, at the end of which they was a horrible purple, a humping great boulder was disclosed. You could almost hear their hearts break. That only left the fat one, and he carried on. The honour of the whole ship rested on his shoulders, and it looked like it. He was breathing like a hurricane, his clothes was dripping sweat, and you couldn't see his face for steam, except where his tongue hung out like a dog's.

'Everyone was laughing now, and most of them packing up to go. There was only limited beer on that hill, and it was thirsty work watching that man. But suddenly he gave a shout: "It's here!" he called.'

When the echoes had died down in the bar, Stoker Deverall chuckled.

'All the "Incredibles" rushed to his side, and bent down into the pit. They got down to it and lifted the statue up. At last, they thought, they had avenged the shame of the lost statue, and re-established their prestige, so to speak. I never saw such triumphant-looking backs, nor heard such an envious silence. But they only lasted for three seconds while the statue was lugged out. There he was, dirtier than ever before, and with a great big dent in his back, where the fat man's pick had hit him. But obviously none other than 'Orace.'

'What happened then?' asked the tall Able Seaman.

Deverall drained his fourth glass of beer. 'Ah then!' he said, and looking up saw the vast bulk of the cook filling his horizon. The story had obviously worked him up to a tense pitch of excitement. Deverall dallied with him.

'Ullo, mate!' he said.

The cook swung his arms loosely, and spat on his hands. He spoke with slow relish.

'I've been waiting ten years for to-day,' he said. 'You won a pound on me, did you?'

Deverall rose hastily.

'There's no hurry, Stokes,' said the cook gently, as he removed his coat. 'You can let me know next week whether that quid was worth it.'

RETURN.

*When I am dead, if aught survives of me
'Twill be a core of spirit, purged of sin,
A tiny flickering tongue of flame within
The throbbing pulses of eternity;
No more confined in irksome flesh, but free
To follow Beauty's star, perchance to win
Her Holy of Holies, there to enter in—
Enough were this of Immortality.*

*And if, so purged, the spirit be still aware,
—Drawn by compulsive urge of memory—
Of earthly scenes once hallowed by its love,
I shall return, like a small wayward air,
O'er heath and ling and brownèd fern to rove,
And home in some deep goyal on Dunkery.*

E. W. HENDY.

BY THE WAY.

CORONATION YEAR dawns : because of the human tragedy of December, as unprecedented as profound, it will not be the Coronation of our anticipations, but it will be nonetheless the Coronation of an immensely popular King, and it will be shorn of none of its splendour. That will, in fact, be increased by reason of the presence of a Queen, and a Queen so loved. We are promised the vastest concourse of humanity that has ever been gathered together in one area : steamships, trains, charabancs, and cars will be bringing people into the heart of London from all parts of the world. With the recollection of the unseemly struggling masses on certain sections of the route at King George V's Funeral, often completely blocking for hours beforehand the approach to balconies and windows for which sums had been paid, we must hope that next May the millions of would-be joyful sight-seers will not make joyful sight-seeing dangerous, where it remains possible.

★ ★ ★

As I write, the ghastly struggle for Madrid still goes on, and the international reactions are peculiarly sinister. One of the many reflections born of this singularly bloody conflict is that during the last few years a great and none too encouraging a change has come over English judgments. In former times, if there was more intensity, there was also a more dispassionate appraisal of right and wrong : we took sides and violently, but we did not wholly refrain from noting the beam in our own eyes. That cruelties and massacres inevitably accompany civil war

is only too well established ; that they have occurred on both sides in Spain is indubitable—and yet no word from those who see the struggle as a valiant endeavour of Democracy to resist Fascism to suggest that the democrats have been, or could have been, guilty of the most abominable atrocities. Similarly, a few years ago Lenin was described as ‘ a genial man ’ by one who was ardently in favour of the Communist regime : is it old-fashioned to think that murder, by whosoever committed and for whatsoever end, is still murder :

* * *

A short while ago I was in a Lancashire cotton town and walked upon the great, grim moors in the midst of which it lies. As we climbed to them, my companion chanced to remark that it was not many years since the house from which we had set out was on their edge, no other houses beyond it ; now a number of rows of small, neatly built villas intervene. I said I supposed that the population of the town had increased and made extension as necessary there as everywhere else, but I was told that on the contrary it had declined. What a singular England it is that we should see our lovely land covered yearly more and more with bricks and mortar even on the outskirts of towns where fewer live ! And what will be left of it for our children :

* * *

Recently it has befallen me to be in touch with two men, one of whom is well known to those with and for whom he has worked for the greater part of a busy life, but is almost unknown to the public at large, the other of whom could scarcely be named correctly even by those for whom he has laboured unremittingly and without pay for many years. Neither man has yet received any honour or official recognition : few have served their generation more wisely or

well. It is singularly often those whose names are most in the newspapers or on our lips whose work is most ephemeral. For instance, Sir Godfrey Collins, one of the kindest and most unassuming men who ever attained to Cabinet rank, had at least as much influence and ten times as many friends and personal admirers as have many who cut a much more conspicuous figure upon the political stage. So much for the virtues of publicity.

★ ★ ★

That one whose small output of short lyrics was confined almost invariably to the theme of the futility, disillusion, and bitterness of human existence, should be proclaimed by many as the one truly great poet of our age is surely as scathing a commentary upon the spirit of that age as can well be conceived. And it is significant to consider that the majority of our most widely read novelists dwell, though without Housman's music, persistently upon the same theme. As to the great achievements of Man's intellect and the grander victories of Man's spirit, modern writers of note are almost completely silent. If later historians are to judge this age by the literature which has most appealed to it they will have abundant justification for calling it one of the darkest through which humanity has ever passed. And yet it is the age when it could be said with truth of the Anzacs—by an unnoted poet—that they were

*Brave where half a world of men
Are brave beyond all earth's rewards*

and the age when scientific discovery and mechanical invention have opened up new worlds of daring and of splendour. Never before, not even in the heyday of the Renaissance, has Man been the victim of such contrasts—and the best-known writers allow him little resolve and

less virtue. More power, then, to the merry-hearted scribblers !

*Singer of sadness, melancholy mind
That frowned on Life and was afraid of Love,
At length in freedom Truth's relief you find
Now Earth is round your casement and above.*

* * *

Two ladies met recently for the first time at a party and conversation between them chanced to turn upon the morals of a well-known man. Said the first, 'Well, after all he's not married, so I suppose he can take a mistress if he likes.' Said the second, 'Excuse me, but do you happen to be a Christian?' To which the first rejoined, in surprised indignation, 'What on earth has that got to do with it?'

* * *

In spite—or perhaps because—of the scabbard-rattling, turbulent Continent, in these islands the glamour of arms is diminished and the cadres of the Army are so depleted that the very existence of the voluntary system is endangered. A suggested remedy is to reclothe the soldiers in their old gorgeousness—one of the best of all the war stories is that of the mudstained khaki veterans stopping to admire 'a real soldier' who by chance came before them in glowing reds and busby—another suggestion is to bridge the painful gap between the close of military service and the start of civil employment. The old scorn of the wage-earner for his protector has gone, but the former still finds it easier than the latter to get a job—and yet the War Office had warning enough after the Armistice of the need for reform in this respect.

* * *

Is one debarred from recommending a book because the author is a friend? It would be hard if it were so, and

incidentally the enforcement of such a ruling would deprive most critics of to-day of their posts. It is rare indeed nowadays to read a wholly dispassionate review—which is possibly the reason why reviews are much less regarded by the public to-day than they were a generation ago. At any rate let me not conceal any predilections : I have before me four books all written by friends, all of which I have every confidence in bringing to the attention of readers of CORNHILL. The first of these, in bulk and perhaps in importance also, is the *Voltaire* of Alfred Noyes (Sheed & Ward, 12s. 6d. n.), a big book upon a big subject and the rehabilitation, at any rate the presentation, of Voltaire as a human being, one whose influence was, and is, profound. We may hope that Mr. Noyes has not now turned away permanently from poetry and at the same time rejoice that he has applied his intellect and industry to such notable effect.

The second, *Storm and Peace*, by John Beresford (Cobden-Sanderson, 8s. 6d. n.), is one of those rare books of erudition worn lightly which have the special virtue of 'dippability.' Mr. Beresford adds to his distinction in the civil service a special interest in letters, especially of the eighteenth century ; in this collection his range is wide, beginning with new light on the '45 from the Chatsworth archives, going on to a moving biography in brief of Gordon and then by way of his 'beloved parson,' Woodforde, and others in pleasant rambles of tranquillity and thought—a most agreeable book for all tastes but the sensational.

Thirdly comes Edmund Blunden's biography entitled *Keats' Publisher : A Memoir of John Taylor* (Cape, 8s. 6d. n.) which every lover of Keats will be glad to have, for we owe Taylor grateful remembrance (how many publishers would go to Gravesend to see a young, unremunerative, ill author off to Italy and then write to his sister in kindly reassurance :

—it is a pity Mr. Blunden does not give the letter which, as readers will remember, Mrs. Adami published in CORNHILL in February of last year). Perhaps the title and subtitle of the memoir should really be inverted, for Taylor's life is of interest in itself and his publication of Keats only an incident; but it is that for which he still lives, and Mr. Blunden writes not only with intuitive sympathy, but also an unusual knowledge of the lives of Keats and his circle.

And lastly I have *Frances Fortescue Urquhart*: A Memoir by Cyril Bailey (Macmillan, 6s. n.), or as every Balliol man will say, 'Sligger by Cyril.' How one who was shy and in some ways uncommunicable of spirit, at any rate a little withdrawn within himself, could gain and retain the friendship, generation after generation, of undergraduates was Sligger's secret, but in so far as it can be told it is, with simplicity and attraction, by his friend and colleague in this valued little book—a model biography in brief.

* * *

And two other books—if any lover of England was so unlucky as not to get both for Christmas, let him or her now remedy the omission. *Edward Thomas's Collected Poems* (Faber, 3s. 6d. n.) with their beautiful introduction by Walter de la Mare, as just as generous, will live far longer than many a more clamorous volume: and Walter Wilkinson is an annual; this time he takes his *Puppets Through Lancashire* (Bles, 5s. n.), and I for one will follow him wherever he goes. I have read every one of his five preceding volumes and, which is more, read them aloud and I am not breaking the habit yet awhile. There are few better to acquire.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 159.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 29th January.

'Do not sigh, do not weep !
The priests are on the ——— ———,
They march along the deep.'

1. '——— her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,'
2. 'Or by a ——— press, with patient look
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.'
3. 'Though he should dance from ——— till peep of
day —'
4. 'So let me lie, —
The grass below ; ———, the vaulted sky.'
5. 'It panted for thee like the hind at ———
For the brooks, my love.'

Answer to Acrostic 157, November number : 'Gaily Green' (Smollett : 'To Leven Water'). 1. GleaminG (Tennyson : 'The Lady of Shalott'). 2. AppeaR (Milton : 'Comus'). 3. IncensE (Keats : 'Ode to Psyche'). 4. LovE (Shakespeare : 'Phoenix and the Turtle'). 5. YoN (Gray's Elegy).

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Rosa Perry, Ormskirk, and the Rev. Edward Kock, Enfield, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY 1937.

THE PROBLEM OF S. JOHN.

BY THE HON. RALPH SHIRLEY.

It has been assumed until a comparatively recent date that the author of the Fourth Gospel was John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee, the apostle of Jesus Christ, and that this said John died in extreme old age at Ephesus ; or that, failing the apostle's actual authorship of the Gospel, the Gospel in question was written from notes dictated by him to one of his disciples in Asia Minor.

Tradition also maintains that this same John, when exiled to Patmos, wrote also, under divine inspiration, the Book of Revelation. It is, however, quite impossible, in view of the internal evidence, to credit the authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the Book of Revelation to the same individual ; the standpoint of the two writers has nothing in common, and, in addition to this, the Greek style of the Gospel is far more cultured than that of the Book of Revelation and points unmistakably to a different hand.

This, however, is not all. There is strong reason to believe in the first place that John, the brother of James, never left Palestine, and, in the second, that he died a violent death at the hands of the Jews, thus sharing at a later date the fate of his brother James.

A prediction of his death is put into the mouth of Jesus in Mark c. 10 vv. 35-40, and in Matthew c. 20 vv. 20-23. Jesus says in reply to a request of James and John that they might sit on His right hand and on His left when He came in His glory, '*Ye shall drink indeed of my cup and be*

baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.'

The obvious meaning of this is that the apostles James and John should both meet with a martyr's death as did their Master, and as a matter of fact, we know that James did so. This incident is referred to in Acts c. 12 v. 2, where it is said that Herod killed James the brother of John with the sword.

It would naturally be assumed in view of the words ascribed to Jesus that John was destined to meet with a similar fate, and indeed we have some remarkable evidence to this effect. Though the writings of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the early part of the second century, have perished, some fragments of his *Expositions of the Sayings of the Lord* quoted by Eusebius and Philip of Side, a church historian of the sixth century, are still extant. One of these is to the effect that 'John the Apostle was put to death by the Jews, thus plainly fulfilling along with his brother the prophecy of Christ regarding them.'

This statement is also quoted by Georgius Hamartolus, a monkish chronicler of the tenth century, and is confirmed by a note in the Syrian Martyrology (dated A.D. 411) which contains the following entries of martyrs whose deaths are to be commemorated: 'Dec. 27, John and James the apostles in Jerusalem.' (Jerusalem being presumably given as the place in which they suffered martyrdom.) Similarly, a further entry under date December 28 gives the martyrdom of 'Paul and Simon Cephas, the crown of the apostles of our Lord, in the city of Rome.'

We have a further confirmation from another source, that of Aphrahat, Metropolitan of Nineveh, who in his

homily entitled *De Persecutione*, dated about A.D. 343, refers to various Christians who suffered martyrdom in the following words : ' Great and excellent is the martyrdom of Jesus. To Him followed the faithful martyr Stephen whom the Jews stoned. Simon also and Paul were perfect martyrs ; James and John trod in the footsteps of their Master Christ,' the implication obviously being that James and John, like Stephen, Peter and Paul, suffered martyrdom.

It is implied elsewhere that John remained in Palestine while Paul and Barnabas devoted themselves to the conversion of the Gentiles. (See Galatians c. 2 v. 9.) Nor is there any suggestion that he subsequently changed his mind in this respect.

Against these very definite statements is the long-standing tradition to the effect that John the apostle, the son of Zebedee, lived to be an old man and became a pillar of the Church in Asia Minor, eventually passing away at Ephesus. The presence of a leader of the Christian Church at Ephesus whose name was John is so persistent that it is impossible to ignore it, but the question arises, was this John the apostle ?

Now, Papias, in another frequently quoted fragment which has been preserved by Eusebius, alludes in the same context to two different Johns. In reference to the enquiries he had made with regard to the life and work of Jesus, he says :

' If anywhere, anyone should come, who had companied with the Elders, I ascertained the sayings of these Elders, what Andrew or what Peter had said, or what Philip or what Thomas or James or what John or Matthew or any other of the disciples of the Lord had said ; and also what Aristion and John the Elder, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I supposed that the things to be derived from books were not of such profit to me as the things derived from the living and abiding voice.'

Here it is clear that we have not only reference to John the brother of James who had passed away at the time that these observations were made, but also to another John the Elder who apparently still survived, as implied in the present tense that is used in regard to him.

Beyond this, it is plain that a certain John, who lived in Asia Minor, is identified in tradition with the 'Beloved Disciple' who figures in the pages of the Fourth Gospel. If this identification is correct, it is possible that the John in question was a mere youth at the date of the Crucifixion.

It may be conjectured that in course of time the traditions in reference to the two Johns became inextricably confused and that it was finally assumed that they related to one individual. Dr. Latimer Jackson observes in his *Problem of the Fourth Gospel*:¹

'The Gospel, beyond all reasonable doubt, originated in Asia Minor and a stream of tradition must be reckoned with which goes near to prove that John the apostle lived his life and died a martyr's death in Palestine.' 'Whoever he was,' says this author, 'the Evangelist was assuredly a Jew by birth and early training; he was in all probability a Jew of Palestine who at some period or other had quitted his Palestinian home, and after much travel, had found himself on the soil of Asia Minor. . . . Beyond all question, he was a man of soul and brain, of a contemplative turn of mind, in touch with Greek philosophy and versed in Alexandrian speculation; a philosopher and theologian.'

His character and intellectual outlook do not recall in the least degree those of John the son of Zebedee, who, from what we learn of him in the Synoptic Gospels, appears to have been rather the stormy petrel of the apostolic circle.

¹ *The Problem of the Fourth Gospel*, by H. Latimer Jackson, D.D., Cambridge University Press.

A further question necessarily arises, assuming, as I think we are bound to do, that John the Elder was the disciple who became a pillar of the Church of Asia Minor, and spent his declining years in Ephesus. Was he actually the author of the Fourth Gospel? or was it written by one of the circle of his intimate disciples? If written by him, the indication points to the fact that he must have written it in his extreme old age. The date of the Gospel can hardly have been earlier than the first decade of the second century and was very possibly appreciably later. Is it not more probable that John the Elder was the inspirer of this Gospel which was written from notes of conversations taken down from his dictation by one of his disciples after his death, who had, it may be assumed, imbibed something of the spiritual outlook of his Teacher? If so, the guess may be hazarded that the references in this Gospel to the 'Beloved Disciple' and 'that other Disciple' who remains unnamed, refer to this John who in his very early manhood was one of the disciples of Jesus, and who on account of his youth and lack of position among them did not arouse the jealousy of the twelve, which might otherwise have been anticipated owing to the marked preference shown to him by his Master.

There is considerable difficulty in assuming that if John the Elder were actually the author of the Gospel, he would have constantly referred to himself in the terms in which 'that other Disciple' is so frequently alluded to. Assuming that the Gospel was written by a devoted disciple of John the Elder, these references to his beloved teacher would appear natural enough.

There are indications that the Fourth Gospel was not, in the first instance, as readily accepted as authoritative as the other three, and its ascription to John the apostle was

doubtless in the nature of an attempt to secure its recognition as a no less reliable source than the earlier Gospels.

As regards this authorship, a further point arises when we come to consider the problem presented by the Book of Revelation. Now the initial chapters of this remarkable book point unmistakably to its having been written by one who was looked upon as the supreme head of the Churches of Asia Minor. The book (it will be remembered) commences as follows :

‘ The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass ; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who gave witness of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ even of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the word of the prophecy and keep the things that are written therein, for the time is at hand.’

Now it will be noticed in the first instance that this book purports to be a definite revelation of Jesus Christ to his ‘ Servant John ’ and the preamble is followed by a greeting of the said John to the seven Churches which are in Asia. To each of the angels (or bishops) of these churches he has a separate message couched in language of a most authoritative kind, a language which unmistakably conveys the idea of an archbishop addressing his subordinates. Such language, even though claiming to be a message from the Master, could hardly be addressed to the Bishops of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor except by one who was looked upon as their supreme head. Now there was no one who could be held to correspond to this description except John of Ephesus. He was the sole survivor of those who had known Jesus during his lifetime. He lived at Ephesus and must have been regarded by the Christians of

Asia Minor with an especial reverence over and above all the Bishops of the Asiatic Church.

Tradition has it that he was present in Rome during the persecution of the Church under Domitian, that he was tortured and subsequently exiled to Patmos, an island near the coast of Asia Minor, which we know from other sources was used as a place of banishment by the Roman Emperors. What then more likely than that he should have taken advantage of his term of exile to indict a denunciation of Rome, as the persecuting power of the Church of Christ ?

It will be noted also that in this preamble the fact is twice emphasised that the predictions made are of things which must shortly come to pass inasmuch as 'The time is at hand.' This at once rules out all those fantastic interpretations with regard to the number of the Beast with which students of eschatology are so familiar.

Now if we are right in accepting the very plausible supposition that the author of 'The Book of Revelation' was none other than the John of Ephesus referred to by Papias as John the Elder and not one of the Twelve Apostles, but a youthful disciple who found especial favour in his Master's eyes and who after his Master's crucifixion left Palestine and finally settled in Asia Minor and preached the Gospel there and, outliving all others who had known Jesus, became regarded in an especial sense as a supreme authority and pillar of the Church, we have a clue to the meaning and interpretation of the Book of Revelation which nothing else can adequately supply. We have also a further, though much less certain, clue to the source and origin of the Fourth Gospel. This, as we have seen, could not have been indited by the same hand as the Book of Revelation. John the Elder of Ephesus is therefore ruled out as its author. The whole atmosphere of the Gospel and especially the

preamble with its reference to the Logos or 'Word,' point to its authorship emanating from a presumably Jewish Christian who had settled in Asia Minor and was saturated with the Alexandrian philosophy of the day and especially with the writings of Philo and his conception of the Logos or 'Second God.' Where should we be more likely to find such a writer than in the entourage of John the Elder at Ephesus? A youthful disciple of John, perhaps of mixed Jewish and Greek parentage, he idealises his Master and absorbs his teaching with enthusiasm, but in so doing he does not forget the Greek philosophy of the Alexandrian school which has been the dominant influence of his early education; and finally, after his Master's death in extreme old age, he weaves together the Christian teaching of John with the philosophy of Alexandria steeping them both in his own mystical conceptions of the Christ and, taking full advantage of the notes of incidents and localities which he had written down at the feet of the sole survivor of those who had known Jesus in the flesh, he evolves a spiritual version, partly fact and partly idealised fancy, of the story already told by others with an entirely different intellectual outlook than himself and, in the forefront of the narrative, places his idealised Christ and, after him, but still more prominent than the Twelve Apostles, he sketches in a portrait of his own revered teacher, unnamed indeed but handed down to all later generations as 'that other Disciple' or, more significantly still, as 'the Disciple whom Jesus loved.'

What then must we conclude as to the work (presumably) penned by that Disciple himself, 'The Book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine'—and what of the much-disputed problem of the Beast with seven heads whose number was six hundred three score and six?

Taking up the position which we have adopted—that the book was written by John the Elder as an exile at Patmos driven forth from Rome during the Christian Persecution under Domitian and fulminating his denunciations of the persecuting Roman Empire under the pseudonym of ‘Babylon the Great’ from his place of exile—we are able to interpret the Beast with seven heads as the allegorised master of Rome, the arch persecutor, first incarnate in the person of Nero and secondly in the person of Domitian, who revived the Neronian persecution of the Christians and was regarded by John of Ephesus as a sort of Nero redivivus.

‘Here is wisdom,’ says the author of this mysterious communication, ‘let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast, for it is the number of a Man and his number is six hundred three score and six.’ The clue to this number lies in the correspondence between numerals and Hebrew (not Greek) letters. In both Greek and Hebrew each letter corresponds to a numeral. Many have been misled into taking the Greek letters in terms of numerals instead of the Hebrew. But the actual interpretation admits of no doubt. It is in fact proved by a variant reading which gives 616 instead of 666. For whereas N (e) ron K (e) s(a)r, as the letters of the Greek appellation *Νέρων Καῖσαρ* would be transliterated into Hebrew, gives us numerically $50 + 200 + 6 + 50 + 100 + 60 + 200 = 666$, if we take the Latin spelling of the Emperor’s name ‘Nero’ (omitting the last consonant numerically representing 50), we obtain the number of 616 instead. Such a coincidence could hardly be claimed as the result of accident. Nero then is the Beast *par excellence*, but in a general sense he is the Beast as head of the persecuting Roman Empire. When therefore this persecution is renewed under Domitian,

that Emperor appears in the light of Nero, the persecutor of the Christians, come to life once more. The Beast has seven heads. 'The seven heads,' says the Apocalypse (c. 17, v. 9), 'are seven mountains' (i.e. the seven hills of Rome) and (also) they are seven kings, i.e. the seven successive heads of the Roman Empire, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus. 'The five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a little while, and the Beast that was and is not, is himself also an eighth' (i.e. Domitian the successor of Titus who is in effect, on this hypothesis, Nero redivivus, and (prophesies John of Ephesus) 'he goeth into perdition.' He was in fact assassinated A.D. 95.

Now it is clear from this that the Book of Revelation purports to be written in the reign of Vespasian, for the author says, 'The one (i.e. the sixth) is,' that is to say, he is now on the imperial throne. 'The other is not yet come and when he cometh he must continue a little while' (i.e. Titus, who in fact reigned under two years). 'The eighth (Domitian) is of the seven,' that is, he follows Titus the seventh Emperor. The author, we may assume, wrote after Domitian's assassination or he would have hardly have used the expression 'he goeth into perdition,' but the suggestion intended is that the book was penned before these events (i.e. before the premature death of Titus and the assassination of his successor). It in fact purports, as indicated above, to have been written in the reign of Vespasian. This, as we know, was a familiar literary device of those days, of which the Book of Daniel, written long after the occurrences which it predicted, is a well-recognised example.

This interpretation indeed gives us the clue to the date of the Book of Revelation, which we may put down at

approximately A.D. 96—within a year of Domitian's assassination. The idea of regarding Domitian as Nero redivivus was doubtless originally suggested to John of Ephesus by the fact that after Nero's suicide in A.D. 68 rumours were current throughout the Roman Empire that he was not really dead, and advantage was taken of this by various impostors, one of whom raised a revolt in the West of Asia Minor and another appeared during the reign of Titus. In fact all sorts of fantastic stories grew up round the name of one whose violence and evil deeds had filled the whole Roman world with terror. The author of the Book of Revelation portrays him as one that 'was and is not and is about to come' again in the guise of another persecuting Emperor, namely, Domitian. Thus too he is allegorically alluded to as one who 'hath the stroke of the sword and lived,' the reference being to the manner of Nero's suicide.

One point should be animadverted to, namely, that the interregnum after the death of Nero, a period of civil war during which first one claimant was proclaimed Emperor and then another and no one was able to retain the position until the triumph of Vespasian, is tacitly ignored in the list of Emperors, and Vespasian is regarded as the successor to Nero and therefore the sixth of the seven Emperors.

We may in fact assume that the tradition that the Book of Revelation was written during John's exile in Patmos is correct. The Book breathes throughout an intense spirit of indignation at the ruthless Emperor, the horrors of whose persecution of the early Christian Church were naturally fresh in the mind of the writer. The date of the writing of the book, it may be added, is confirmed by a statement of Irenæus, who makes it coincide with Domitian's death.

The clue to these passages has been missed through a

failure to realise the fact that much of what is written here is in the nature of a prophecy after the event. Once this is recognised the whole interpretation of these cryptic allusions becomes perfectly clear.

As to whether John of Ephesus, the author of the Book of Revelation, is in reality to be identified with the Disciple whom Jesus loved, and whether the portrait of him is, as I have surmised, from the pen of an ardent and admiring disciple written after his death, is of course in the nature of a conjecture, one of many that have been made as to the identity of the 'Beloved Disciple.' I would merely suggest that the conjecture fits in with the probabilities of the case and has more to be said for it than any other of the ingenious surmises that have so far been brought forward. In spite of the opinion voiced by many ecclesiastics, it is not to be thought of that the author of the book would have had the temerity, not to say the conceit, to allude to himself in such very flattering terms. If we reject the hypothesis of John of Ephesus the claim of John the Apostle has much to be said in its favour. This claim is greatly strengthened if we get rid of the stumbling block of his assumed authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The concluding paragraphs of the final chapter are admittedly a later addition and point unmistakably to the fact that its authorship was called in question at a very early period and that it was found necessary to add a statement with a view to emphasising its genuine character.

THE UNICORN.

Go, Unicorn, to your black shades again,
 Where eagerly the white, cold flowers bloom
 Beneath the cypress tree. Go back once more
 To those dark shadows, where the sunlight falls
 Briefly upon your ivory sides, and horn
 Of gold, and on your small, round, golden hooves.
 There shall you call, and from the mandrake swamps,
 Where nightly the enchanted leaves spring forth
 The unicorns shall come. Mostly pure white,
 But some dark as the cypress trees, or gold,
 Burning within the shadows. There too dwells
 The immortal Ram, his gleaming fleece on fire,
 And five great centaurs, silver from the mists
 Shall rise to greet you, shaking from their manes
 The dews of living waters, and green Moly
 • That grows in the deep shade. Go, Unicorn,
 From this harsh day that mocks you with its life,
 Into the purer darkness, where still flames
 The Phoenix. Go where the white horses graze
 With the winged winds, where truth is but a dream,
 And old Greece has not lost her pure belief,
 Nor the once childlike faith its holy dream,
 Where saints still tread on flames and smile from fire,
 And walk unharmed with dragons through the night.
 Go, Unicorn, this unbelieving day
 Will shrivel your gold horns, your light round hooves
 Seek your dark shades, graze where the white flowers bloom
 Ere men have called your silver mane a cloud,
 And your bright amber eyes the sun's brief falling.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH.

THE DESCENDANT OF LUCULLUS.

A TRUE EXPERIENCE.

BY GEOFFREY BRET HARTE.

As I look back upon this unique experience, it assumes an air of unreality, and I sometimes wonder if, after all, it was a magnificent illusion ; the result, perhaps, of poring too many hours over a delightful old book I once picked up, majestically entitled *Manuel de l'Art Culinaire de France*. Written in those distant days when appetites were more hearty, digestions smoother, and life easier than in our harried generation, it has frequently fired my imagination and consoled me after a quarrel with the cook over an indifferent meal.

Then again, I am tempted to go back and see for myself, but wisdom prevents me. It would be foolish to tempt Providence that had once been so lavish. Such an experience, I feel sure, could never be repeated, and to try to recapture it might be to shatter that first precious memory.

It began in Geneva at a bachelors' dinner. As a beginning it could not have been more pleasant, although my host, an inveterate *raconteur*, had only one failing in his prodigious memory, the fact that he had told his stories so often before. It was a reunion of gourmets to which friendship alone had entitled me to be invited ; gourmets to whom the old axiom 'one must eat to live and not live to eat' was anathema. They had raised this function to a subtle art.

My neighbour at table was a Frenchman who had passed the best years of his life in Russia, in the 'good old days'

before the revolution. His memories were entirely gastronomic, also fantastic and, like those of the angler, not wholly credible. When our host gave him a chance he told us some of them in that polished, exquisitely precise way with which the cultured Latin mind expresses itself. His apoplectic colouring and his *embonpoint* lent to them, I must say, a convincing air of truth.

‘It is a sad fact,’ he concluded, ‘that jazz and cocktails have dulled the palate of the younger generation, making it insensible to the great traditions. Yet I ask you,’—he turned to me, raising his glass a little towards the light—‘what could be more conducive to the joy of living than exquisite dishes and a wine of rare vintage such as this?’

As the following morning I was leaving for Paris by car and my route was taking me through some of the most famous gastronomic provinces of France, I ventured to hope that the traditions to which he referred were not quite dead. His bright eyes twinkled with amusement in their enormous setting. ‘Ah, pardon, Monsieur, but I did not say that. The art is not dead, it is merely more difficult to find.’ Politely he enquired about my itinerary, and as we rose from table, he tore a leaf from a little note-book, and scribbling something, folded it up and handed it to me with an air of secrecy, saying, ‘It will be sufficient, Monsieur, to mention my name.’ This magic talisman revealed itself to be an address in Dijon, through which I was passing, and as a delicate attention, in case I should forget it, he had added his name below.

Dijon is a town I am well acquainted with, for in one of its back streets there is an old book-shop from whose dusty shelves many of my prized possessions have come. It is kept by a wizened old man who wears a black silk skull cap, and circular starched cuffs that protrude from the

frayed sleeves of his ancient *redingote*. On my previous visits to the city I had always returned to the hotel for meals, but this time I intended to try the new place. As it was in a part of the town unfamiliar to me, I handed the old man the piece of paper and asked for information.

He peered through his steel-rimmed spectacles at the address. Of course he could tell me the way, he said, but as for the restaurant, well, it was hardly one to be recommended. 'As Monsieur knows, the best place to eat is at his hotel. *Cuisine renommé ! Cave célèbre !*' I thanked him and, neglecting his advice, set out in the direction he had indicated.

The little square given on the address was not very prepossessing, although it was not lacking in local colour. A variety of washing flapped gaily from window to window, suspended from a network of string. There were several cafés, but it was not until I had made a minute examination of every doorway that I came to a dilapidated entrance with the sign : 'Restaurant au 1er Etage.' It did not look inviting and I wondered if I would not be better advised to return to my hotel with its *cuisine renommé* and its *cave célèbre*.

This impression was confirmed after I had ascended the dingy staircase and found myself in a dark, shabby, and none too clean room which reeked reminiscently of former meals. A solitary *commis-voyageur* in a black suit, his napkin tucked under his chin, was eating audibly. A waiter approached and indicated without enthusiasm a row of empty tables.

It dawned upon me suddenly that I had been made a fool of, and my sense of humour was not at the moment equal to appreciating the subtlety of my French acquaintance's little joke. It was clear that being a foreigner, I was not, in his eyes, eligible to appreciate the delicacy of the

French palate, and this was his way of indicating it. I could imagine what a witty anecdote he would make of it, to the delight of his friends. Then I remembered he had said, 'Mention my name.'

It could do no harm to send for the proprietor. He arrived, after taking his time, visibly annoyed at being disturbed. He evidently considered himself a person of some importance. About to turn on my heel, I explained that his restaurant had been recommended to me, no doubt by mistake, and told him by whom.

Had I suddenly drawn a revolver and shouted 'Hands up,' I could not have produced a more prodigious effect. For a moment he stood petrified, then bowing from the waist, dissolved into a torrent of apologies.

'Ah! But why did not Monsieur advise me that he was going to honour me with his presence? Any friend of "these gentlemen" must be served with the very best, and I have nothing,' he moaned, raising his hands in despair, 'absolutely nothing.'

Equally amazed at this sudden change in our relations, I hastened to tell him that a simple meal would be quite sufficient, but he had already gone off into another paroxysm of lamentation. 'Two hours, two little hours, Monsieur shall give me,' he pleaded. 'It is not long to wait, *n'est-ce-pas*? Then Monsieur shall return and all shall be ready.'

Seeing his distress, I readily agreed and filled in the time with another stroll and an *apéritif*, meditating on the way upon the magic effect of my friend's name, and mentally apologising for having wronged him. In this manner I developed a healthy appetite and an undisguised curiosity as to the manner in which it was to be satisfied.

Upon my return, the little restaurant was crowded with people who had already finished eating, to judge by the

cloud of smoke that filled the air. It was not exactly the atmosphere in which to enjoy a good dinner. No sooner, however, had the waiter caught sight of me, than he sprang forward and with great deference hustled me through another door, down a narrow passage and into a private room. What met my eyes was certainly a surprise !

The room was small ; the walls horribly ornate with crimson brocade. A single gilded armchair occupied the centre, and before it was a table exquisitely laid. Nothing could have presented a greater contrast to the room than this table. Handsome silver and crystal glistened on a snow-white cloth. Flowers, no doubt from the hand of Madame, the proprietor's wife, decorated but did not overload it. And what an array of glasses, forks and knives there were !

As I stood gazing at this scene, Madame entered. Small, middle-aged and corpulent, she wore a black silk dress of the kind reserved for special occasions. She greeted me with easy assurance tinged with respect, the air of one long accustomed to waiting upon royalty. As a friend of *ces messieurs*, she said, I was no doubt aware that her husband was attending to the *cuisine* in person. As I complimented her upon the flowers, she flushed with pride, then remembering her rôle, led me to the gilded chair with the air of an ambadress.

Then began the most amazing dinner to which I have ever sat down. A little to my right, Madame stood, and under her critical eye the waiter was metamorphosed into a model of attention. A dish of caviare was presented, and if Dijon had been on the Volga, it could not have been more perfect. At a discreet signal from Madame, a dusty bottle was uncorked and its amber fluid poured into one of my array of glasses.

No, certainly, my leg was not being pulled, and my amazement increased as the meal progressed. A *Bisque d'Homard* appeared which could only have been prepared by a *cordons bleu*, and this was followed by a delicious dish of mountain trout. Another venerable bottle was opened and another glass of exquisite vintage poured. 'Monsieur shall not drink from the wine-list,' the proprietor's wife declared. 'Monsieur shall drink from the special *crû* reserved for "these gentlemen."' They were indeed the quintessence of the great cellars of France: Pouilly 1874, Château Mouton-Rothschild 1870, and Château Filhot 1864.

I was not supplied with a menu, but every new course was ushered in by Madame, who announced the contents and stood by while I was being served. After a swift, experienced glance at the table to see that all was as it should be, she motioned to the waiter and both of them left the room; the door was softly closed and I was left to feast in solitary splendour. This, Madame explained, was the manner in which *ces messieurs* desired to be served.

Who 'these gentlemen' were, I had not the faintest idea, and when dinner reached its zenith with a roast pheasant on a *canapé* of truffles, I no longer dared to ask. My ignorance might cause me to be driven like an impostor into the street. Over the *Fois-gras en Serviette* and a crisp *Salade d'Endives* I decided to hold my peace and do my investigating later.

At this point, the door opened again, but instead of Madame there loomed into view a magnificent apparition, the proprietor himself in his full chef's regalia. Beneath a white jacket flowed an ample skirt-like apron, while the immaculate *bonnet* sat like a crown upon his head. A second little table was introduced laden with liqueur bottles. His work in the kitchen done, he had come to prepare

before me the *Crêpes Suzette*, his last *chef-d'œuvre*. Each *crêpe* was flavoured with a different liqueur, after which, according to the traditional rite, I had to choose a final one prepared with the liqueur I had preferred. When everything had been noiselessly removed and coffee served, the cream of his cellar was produced : a bottle of Armagnac 1810.

To my amazement, when the bill for this feast was presented, it was unbelievably moderate. If gain played no part in this remarkable dinner nor in the respect with which it had been served, what then was the answer to the riddle ?

That night in the seclusion of my hotel bedroom, over a bottle of Vichy as a precaution against the penalty for over-indulgence, I unburdened my curiosity in a letter to my Swiss host. After asking him to thank our mutual friend for my remarkable experience, I begged him to tell me in confidence his true identity, and also who were 'these gentlemen' among whom he was evidently such an important personage.

Three days later in Paris, his answer awaited me.

'Your modern Aladdin,' it ran, 'is the descendant of Lucullus. Did you not know ? He is a member of that famous *Club des Cent*, whose hundred devotees live to maintain the great gastronomic traditions of the past. They scour France in search of hidden talent, and . . . keep their discoveries to themselves. A great chef, like the true artist,' the letter continued, 'respects the connoisseur. As a guest of "these gentlemen" you have commanded it. No doubt, *cher ami*, you have likewise merited it. In any case, consider yourself fortunate and be wary of your secret, for Fame has spoilt many an artist !'

Perhaps he is right. It would indeed be a pity to return some day and find it all changed—a gilded porter before a revolving door, red plush seats, food of indifferent quality, and a thousand-franc bill at the exit.

DIARY OF A D.C.

(Being extracts from the diary of the District Commissioner,
Wangabumba, Gassabagga Colony, British East Africa.)

BY KENNETH AUSTIN.

I.

May 12th.

DECIDE to go on *safari* to the Buduhudu chiefdom to investigate alleged malpractices of the Chief. As there is no motor road shall have to walk. Will take me three days to get there, so should be pleasant change from the office. Tell local headman to get me porters. Boys instructed to have loads ready at 5 a.m. to-morrow for early start before sunrise.

May 13th.

Boys ready at 7 a.m. Inspect porters. Cheery crowd: why, heaven knows! Discard one child of fourteen, one octogenarian, and one man with crippled leg. Give local headman severe raspberry for producing ineffectuals, and send him off to get others. This takes him two hours. Returns smelling of drink. Deal out very severe raspberry. *Safari* gets under weigh at 9 a.m., porters singing, good path. Feel less disgruntled. After a time ask guide if he is going in right direction. No reply. Get angry. Discover guide is deaf and dumb. Call for local headman with view to laying violent hands on him. Cannot be found. Vanished. Obtain new guide. *Safari* proceeds.

Get into camp 2 p.m. Porters put up tent. Order *safari* to be ready at 5 a.m. next morning.

May 14th.

My boy, Juma, wakes me 6 a.m. Ask why late. Replies very sorry, but asleep. Say that he has no right to be asleep at 5 a.m. Replies that of course what I say is quite correct, but that sleep is an act of Providence. Cannot think of answer to this, and fall asleep again. Boy wakes me up half an hour later, saying *safari* will be late if I don't get up. Get up in dressing-gown to drink tea. Meditate on postponing *safari* and staying in camp for day. Legs stiff as pokers, and body requires at least three hours more sleep. Decide to go back to bed. Find boy has folded up and removed bed. Ask who told him to. Replies that I myself said we were going on *safari*. Unanswerable. Breakfast good. Feel better.

Porters take down tent and line up loads. Inspect loads. Find live chicken in the drinking-water can. Most insani-tary ! Who put it there ? My boy, Juma. Ask boy what the deuce he means by putting it there. Replies in injured tones that he obtained it for my dinner to-night. Order that it be conveyed in different manner. We set out at 8.30 a.m.

Shortly after starting, see some partridge. Where is the gun ? Juma has forgotten to get it out. Brings gun-case. Find that chicken has been tied on to it. Takes five minutes to disentangle chicken and open case. Meanwhile partridge flown off.

Get into camp about 1.30 and sleep till 5 p.m. Decide to sit in camp and read till dinner-time. An hour later a horrible screeching and clucking heard. Noise shortly afterwards augmented by shouting, screaming and yelling of apparently considerable number of people. Sounds like a riot or unlawful assembly. Try to recall provisions of Riot Act. Look up the Laws of the Colony. Index refers

me to Vol. III Cap. 163 Sec. 53(b)(i), as amended by Vol. V Cap. 184 Sec. 5(m), as amended by Cap. 207 Sec. 17(x)(ix), to be read in conjunction with Cap. . . . Give it up, and go out to see what is afoot. Find that the chicken has escaped, and is being pursued by my boy, my cook, twenty-five porters, two police askaris, and the local headman. Tough, stout-hearted chicken. Gives them a good run, but odds against it. A few minutes later hear it screeching its last. In due course appears for my consumption. Verily, a tough chicken. Tell Juma to wake me at 5 a.m. Turn in.

May 15th.

Boy wakes me. Still dark. Thank heaven natives can tell the time by instinct. Get up and shave. Shaving most painful process owing to sunburn. Remove layer of skin along with beard. Sit down to breakfast. Always believe in good breakfast before the day's work, whatever the hour. Finish breakfast, and reflect that it should be getting light. Boys start packing up loads, porters taking down tent. Sit in deck-chair and watch. Strikes me as curious that it does not get light. Look at watch—3 a.m.

II.

May 16th.

Get up late, as am now encamped at Buduhudu, and determined to rest after exertions of *safari*. No early rising, no curtailed nights. Intend to stay two or three days investigating malpractices of Chief of Buduhudu. Annoyed to find young Police Inspector, named Jones, from neighbouring district, camped half a mile away. Pursued by civilisation. Even in Buduhudu cannot be alone with nature.

Shaving unadulterated agony owing to ravages of sunburn. Begin to remove beard and second layer of skin (first layer

went yesterday). Have heard that man has seven skins. In five days' time therefore shall be completely flayed. Unpleasant prospect. Meditate on growing beard. In spite of fair hair can grow excellent red beard. Attractive colour. Feel however that young Jones might think me slack. Essential to keep up appearances in the bush, retain full self-respect, prestige of the white man, etc. Second layer removed.

Temper ragged. Breakfast. Feel slightly better. Long interview with Chief of Buduhudu. Feel worse. Jones appears. Evidently young man of intense energy. Feel worse still. Says that his great ambition is to shoot a lion. Hears that there are many lions round here. Intends to obtain native hut on outskirts of village, make loop-holes in wall, tie up cow outside as decoy. Would I join him in the enterprise? Feels certain that I would not miss such an opportunity for sport. Do not feel so certain myself. Says he had relied on me, knowing my reputation as well-known sportsman. Unanswerable. Most annoying young man. Ask if hut is strongly built, and impossible for lion to enter. Assures me that it is. Reply that I am not really interested, having shot, of course, a good many lion in my time, but will come for sport. Reflect that this not altogether divorced from truth, as I did once shoot a lion in mistake for a hyæna.

Jones reappears in evening. Announces that he has obtained clean native hut, and ancient cow. We dine, and set forth. Hut clean, but ventilation non-existent. Establish ourselves in camp-chairs behind loop-holes. Extinguish all lamps, and sit in dark. Cow, tied up outside, visible in moonlight. Sights of rifle quite invisible, so imagine lion is pretty safe, if he does come. Boys kindle fire to make tea. Smoke fills hut, owing to absence of chimney,

window, or other means of egress. Eyes run, and find it impossible to see anything at all.

Both sit in utmost discomfort, unable either to sleep or keep awake. Tremendous excitement about 3 a.m., as crouching beast discerned outside, a little way off. We wake up and seize our arms. Breathless tension. The shape comes nearer. We line our rifles on to the oncoming target. Heart thumping. Hope the roof strongly built, as have heard that lions frequently jump on to roofs. Might be unpleasant if he fell through. Take careful aim (still unable to see sights), when am arrested by awful scream from owner of hut, 'My goat, my goat, since yesterday I have lost him, my goat.' Retire in dudgeon to my chair and doze in abominable discomfort till morning.

May 17th.

Sleep till lunch. Did not invite Jones to lunch, but he duly appears at 1 p.m. Expresses great regret at our bad luck on previous night. Spoor of two lion found not fifty yards from our decoy (I thought the cow looked a pretty unattractive specimen). If I would care to try again to-night, he would guarantee success. Flatly refuse. Replies that he would wager anything that we would get one to-night, but quite understands that at my age one is not so energetic. . . . Goes on to suggest that we take camp-beds into the hut, lie down, and put a boy to watch at the loop-hole. This appears to me to make proposition more feasible, though uncertain if this method usually adopted by 'well-known sportsman.' Feel it advisable to show this young man that men older than himself are, on occasion, capable of exertion. Agree to try again.

After dinner instal ourselves once more in hut. Cow tethered outside, loaded rifles at loop-holes. Boy put on

guard to watch. Stench not lessened since previous night, but stretched on camp-bed, discomfort less acute. Drowsiness overcomes me.

Next thing I hear is hoarse whisper in my ear, 'Sir, wake up . . . wake up.' Try to collect my senses. Look at watch and find it is 2.30 a.m. Get up and try to locate loop-hole. Ask in equally hoarse whisper, 'Is it a lion?' Boy replies, 'No . . . sir . . . sir, the cow has come unfastened and run away.'

III.

May 18th.

Still encamped at Buduhudu. Decide to walk round village and investigate malpractices of the Chief of Buduhudu, for which purpose I originally came here. Don khaki shorts and canvas gaiters. Latter have 'spat' formation, but extend to knee, and button down side. My own invention (unfortunately discovered recently that two other people had also invented them). Breakfast with Police Inspector Jones, who for some reason seems disinclined to leave Buduhudu, and return to his own district. Says he would like to introduce me to his uncle who is an Arch-deacon. Thinks his uncle would be interested in the model of my gaiters. Feel this is meant to be impertinent.

Point out advantages of gaiters when touring country on foot. Jones not impressed and says I ought to use a bicycle. He always uses bicycle. Rides it down hill with boy running in front. Walks uphill while boy pushes bicycle. Conceal scorn of this device with difficulty.

Find that cook is selling me eggs at double usual price. Further discover that the hen that laid them was a present to *me* from the local headman two days ago. Sack cook, but re-engage him, as should otherwise get no lunch.

Decide to return home to-morrow. Have observed no malpractices of Chief of Buduhudu, except brusque manner when coming to complain that my dog had stolen a leg of mutton from his hut. Make note of this.

Jones has found Belgian trader in vicinity in possession of unlicensed firearm. Wishes to prosecute him, and insists that I hold court in evening, to save all parties fifty-mile journey to District headquarters. Agree to hold court after tea in tent, as Buduhudu boasts no suitable building. Wish I could get rid of Jones.

Sleep all afternoon and wake up with headache. Begin tea. Jones arrives leaving me no option but to ask him to partake. In middle of tea, M. Dupont, Belgian trader, the accused, presents himself. Embarrassing situation, as interpreter, whom Jones promised to produce, not yet turned up, and case cannot therefore begin. Offer Dupont a seat, and go on with tea. Feel it essential to say something, so murmur remark about the weather. He replies in foreign language, nodding head brightly. Seems most uncivil not to offer him cup of tea, in spite of our respective positions. Offer cup of tea. Accepted. Unusual situation; prosecutor, accused, and magistrate having tea together before case. Not certain that serious view of this regrettable incident would not be taken by headquarters, if they knew. Conversation does not flow, but Dupont nods head brightly at intervals. Begin to think I like him better than Jones.

Embarrassing position ended by arrival of interpreter. intelligent native, said to know English and French. Convert tent into court by simple expedient of turning table round, and requesting accused to stand up. Instruct interpreter to take oath and say required words, which I read out distinctly to him. Instead of this, he holds up one hand, and says in loud voice, 'God help me.' Sensation

in court. Jones looks annoyed, accused nods brightly. Have great desire to laugh, but refrain, remembering dignity of my position. Hope interpreter understands more French than English, or should fear serious miscarriage of justice.

Jones gives evidence and produces ancient firearm. Suspect it might be of interest to archæological people. Ask heavily from bench what type of cartridge is used for it. The accused shrugs shoulders, waves arms, and says accommodatingly, 'But anything.' After much questioning elicit that accused's defence is that firearm is an ancient heirloom, descended from his great-great-grandfather, and he has a wife and five children. Remember that 'the quality of mercy is not strained.' Should feel serious strain if case continued much longer. Dismiss accused with warning. Court rises by simple expedient of telling boy to bring whiskey and soda.

IV.

May 22nd.

Back at District headquarters again, to do some office work. Government aeroplane descended yesterday on our station aerodrome. Pilot suggests early morning flight to show me town from above. Discourage idea (unfortunately constructed aerodrome myself). Great relief when flight over, and landing safely accomplished. Never felt so much affection for Wangabumba. How dear to one sometimes are the most familiar sights. On landing observe car at end of 'drome. Discover occupants to be French people, a man and a woman. Say 'Good morning' with sense of great importance, as befits local pro-consul just returned from flight over his district. Man bows and says, 'Ah, you make *une petite promenade apéritive*, is it not?'

They confide in me that they are travelling with small

cinema show. Request my permission to give performance in evening, if I could place Court-house or other building at their disposal. Natives of town certain to enjoy experience. Modest entrance fee. Reply that I consider it excellent idea, delighted to assist. Suddenly wonder if any snag to this, so ask them to come up to office.

At office consult local oracle, my native clerk Methuselah. He has grave doubts and disappears. Reappears ten minutes later with large volume of laws, opened at 'Cinematograph Ordinance.' Burrow in ordinance, and find curious section which says that no film may be shown unless passed by Board of Censors. Explain difficulty in English, but not understood. Explain in French, and obviously understood less. Try both, combined with sign language. More successful.

They say, 'But that is all right, *you* are doubtless the Board of Censors.' No other white man on station, so do not know who else could be, but think it safer to consult Methuselah.

Latter is doubtful, and burrows in laws. Emerges, and says with air of finality that I am not the Board of Censors. Explain to visitors. They are certain that I can appoint Board. Not so certain myself, and consult Methuselah. He disappears into laws again, and finds another section which reads: 'Boards of Censors will be appointed by the Governor as required.' Methuselah shakes head wisely and says that he is sure it has never been required that I should be appointed a Board of Censors. Break news to visitors, who reply that as I am the Governor there will be no difficulty. Am greatly flattered, but explain that am not the Governor (though always thought I ought to be). This they cannot believe for some time. Proves to me what I always suspected, that I have imposing manner.

But I could telegraph the Governor to appoint Board of Censors: Explain that Governor lives six hundred miles away, and nearest telegraph line is thirty miles away. Possibly in a month we could get it fixed up.

They are *désolés*. Assure me films are of high moral tone. Woman weeps and falls into husband's arms. Insecure position as husband waving arms frantically. Looks as if likely to fall into mine at any moment. Conceal myself as far as possible behind Methuselah.

Latter appreciates situation and again burrows in laws. Finds amendment to law that reads: 'private exhibitions may be given of films not previously passed by Board of Censors.' Think hurriedly. Calm visitors and say we will have private exhibition. Woman hysterical. Add hastily that public will be admitted. Both fall on my neck, saying, 'How beneficent is your Excellency.'

V.

May 29th.

Wangabumba District Agricultural Show opens to-morrow. Disapprove strongly of such performances, as whole organisation devolves on me, the only European in district. Supposed to be of great educative value to African native. Nothing ready of course. Mr. Bob Dodkins, an M.P. on tour in East Africa, tactless enough to accept my invitation to open Show, arrives, together with neighbouring D.C.s and other officials, all with wives, and apparently determined to enjoy my hospitality. Hundreds of natives arriving in town. Opening at 10 a.m. to-morrow, so instruct all natives to be ready at 6 a.m. This the only hope of getting them there in time. Nothing else really matters as distinguished visitors always satisfied if large audience to hear their speech.

May 30th.

Go down to show ground at 8 a.m. to make final arrangements, see flags put up, and supervise installing of show cattle in their places. Find confusion reigning. Bulls, bullocks, cows, heifers all entangled, and refuse to enter respective pens. Herdsmen all lost heads. Lose temper and endeavour restore order. Some idiot lets sheep and goats loose among cattle. Final straw. Confusion worse confounded. Had no breakfast and feel desperate. Give up attempting to separate sheep and goats, heifers and bullocks, and put nearest animal in nearest pen. Notice-boards over pens, indicating class of live-stock, definitely impressive, if now quite misleading. Flags flying everywhere. Notice-boards and flags only really important things.

Dash home to breakfast. Start getting into uniform. House-boy and assistant house-boy pull boots on. Cook endeavours to lever me into trousers. Am eventually stood up by combined efforts of staff. Strut forth. Cook rushes after me with sword, completely forgotten. Have to be half-undressed again to introduce bracing arrangement, from which sword is suspended under coat. All complete. Assisted by staff into motor-car. Have to leave door open and legs outside, owing to inability to bend at knees. Friendly visitor drives me to show ground.

Bob Dodkins, M.P., opens show with great éclat. Says how glad he is to be there (improbable), is certain the Show is going to be an outstandingly good one (highly improbable), that he knows everyone is going to have a most enjoyable day (absolutely impossible). I say how grateful we are to Mr. Bob Dodkins, M.P., for coming (untrue), that what we are going to see is a modest effort (only half the truth), and due entirely to the co-operation, keenness,

and esprit de corps of all who took part in the organisation (quite true as I did it all myself).

Wangabumba School Band at this point breaks into 'God Save the King.' Expands itself into second and third verses, ignoring unmistakable and agonised signals from self. At end of third verse heave sigh of relief. Band with renewed fervour begins fourth verse. Observe look of horror on Mr. Bob Dodkins' face. Dash forth from dais. Bandmaster stops dead in middle of verse.

Mr. Bob Dodkins, M.P., thereupon leads procession round show ground, examining exhibits. Feel increasingly nervous as we approach cattle. Endeavour to hasten procession. The M.P. pauses and remarks what fine sheep the District produces, oblivious to fact that half the occupants of the pen are goats. Examines notice-board over bullock pen. Says what fine bullocks we have, while gazing abstractedly at a cow. Observe that small calf has got into bulls' pen, and make further efforts to hasten procession. Relief when we pass on to products of soil.

Afternoon devoted to inter-tribal sports. None of competing natives have ever seen a sports ground before. Obviously never heard previously of a 'hundred yards' or 'quarter-mile.' Programme does not proceed smoothly. Hit on way out of difficulty. Instruct tough askari to run behind competitors, and chivvy them until they have reached finishing tape. The crowd prevents them from escaping on outside. Instruct trusty clerk Methuselah to trot beside competitors to prevent them from leaving course on inside. All goes well until last round of tug of war. Two chiefdoms remain struggling for mastery. All members of the two chiefdoms break ropes and rush on to field, determined to take part. Decide to call it a day. Concentrate on evacuating women, children and Member of Parliament.

May 31st.

Mr. Bob Dodkins, M.P., departs. Congratulates me warmly. Expresses great admiration of all I have done. Mentions great educative value of Show for African natives. States that he was so impressed with the live-stock he had seen, that he intends to make representations at headquarters that a Live-stock Officer should be appointed to the District without delay.

VI.

June 6th.

Just received second severe telegraphic reprimand from headquarters on subject of lateness in submitting my financial estimates for next year. Must start on estimates to-morrow.

June 7th.

Telegram arrives from my neighbour the District Commissioner in charge of the area to the west of me. It appears that a cow has been stolen from a village in his district near the border, and he is chasing the thieves with police. Goes on to say: 'am following thieves reported to be breaking through towards Buduhudu your district aaa will try establish communications with Chief of Buduhudu aaa grateful you endeavour proceed Buduhudu effect enfilading movement.' Incredulous until I recollect that my neighbour is ex-military man. Much too occupied with estimates, but not to be outdone, wire reply: 'pressure of reprimands from headquarters makes it impossible for me to occupy Buduhudu.'

A busy day. Must start on estimates to-morrow.

June 8th.

Furore in office. Methuselah, correspondence clerk, leads in Tikitimaja, cash clerk, by scruff of neck. Accuses him

of forging my signature. Produces signature in question, and points out that it is legible ; therefore it cannot be mine. Annoyed at this reasoning, as have always prided myself on having legible signature, but find that forgery has undoubtedly taken place. Must put off case till estimates are finished. Busy day. Must begin work on estimates to-morrow without fail.

June 9th.

Just beginning on estimates when case of attempted murder is brought in. Accused an old woman, who apparently took strong dislike to son-in-law, and decided to kill him off. Son-in-law voluble. In view of estimates, decide to remand accused woman in custody. Methuselah points out that this is impossible, as our rustic jail has no cell for women, and no wardress. In quandary, as if not in custody, old lady might make further attempt to rid world of son-in-law. Methuselah suggests remanding complainant son-in-law in custody instead. Think this excellent idea, but fear it might be against regulations of Habeas Corpus Act. Decide to take case at once and put off estimates. Unfortunately many witnesses and cannot finish by evening. Send off both complainant son-in-law and accused old woman to sleep in town for night. Warn old woman severely that she is not to attempt any more 'bumping off' till to-morrow. Warn son-in-law that he must on no account be 'bumped off.' Hope to heaven both reappear intact. Must finish case, and do estimates to-morrow.

June 10th.

Very cutting telegram from headquarters about delay in submitting estimates. Wire reply, mentioning unusual pressure of work, etc. Go on with attempted murder case.

Course of justice has to be interrupted in middle of morning in order to get off our once-weekly outgoing mail. Meditate on curious dispensation that provides me with clerk who functions as court interpreter, office clerk, and postal clerk, all in one. Estimates will miss mail, but can send in messenger on bicycle with them to-morrow. Only two hundred miles to Provincial headquarters. Finish case, so will undoubtedly be able to despatch estimates to-morrow.

June 11th.

Feeling run down with too much office work. Go out for day in car.

June 12th.

Despatch telegram, saying estimates delayed through pressure of work combined with sickness.

June 13th.

Must get down to estimates. Tell Methuselah to bring necessary papers. Brings countless files, account books, etc., and stands solemnly beside me. Runner comes in from another District Commissioner, my neighbour on the east, with letter marked 'Urgent.' Tear it open. It begins :

DEAR BILL,

I'm just off on *safari* to Wapihuku to investigate a murder, and get some shooting. I can't get my estimates off for at least a week. Do reassure me yours have not gone in yet. . . .

I reassure him. Methuselah gathers up the files, and smiles brightly when I tell him we will take this afternoon as a half-holiday.

'WHO HELPS HIMSELF.'

BY ALAN JENKINS.

WHEN Mad Neddy Joe the molecatcher, gnomelike in his cape of hessian, who lived in the tarred cabin under Mount Harry, brought news of a dogfox on foot in the Squares, the Master took hounds thither in deference to the old man's counsel ; for according to legend and stable-tattle, Neddy Joe knew every earth and sett and holt by heart and every fox and brock and otter by name between Heathy Brow and Iron River, and Old Forge and Sedlow Wood, which lies far away below the Beacon.

Sterns waving absently in anticipation of pleasures to come, the pack trotted sedately across the fringe of the battlefield where, seven centuries before, peasants and Londoners and Welshmen stood shoulder to shoulder in the first fight for English liberty ; then down the rain-brilliant turf of the deserted racecourse whose red-roofed stands began to echo the voices of the unruly mob of Tom Noddies who gawked out from the winter-smoky old market town with its precipitous streets and jackdaw-haunted castle.

Blutfang, however, had neither desire nor knowledge of sport. Men and hounds spelt death. As the first whimper from Trueborn made the horses cock their ears, he was skulking towards Breaky Bottom. He had fared badly in the night : rain had made the rabbits grass-shy, and when dawn came mistily above the chalk escarpments, he had still been on foot, skirting Houndean Bottom. Eleven o'clock and he had been lying up in a gorse-brake, tired of

seeking an unstopt earth. Moisture had anchored nut-brown feathers in the grass tufts around him.

So he set his mask westwards in a straight point over short crisp turf, on which gossamer hung grey and frail, pearled with drops of rain.

Down across the Bottom, russet with dead bracken bents, he ran ; up through the gnarled hawthorns where black-birds shrieked and jays cursed furtively and fled ; past the graceful ashes which in summer ringdoves loved, and up the other steep side, where many a rider baulked his horse and, turning back, rode hard through the length of the Bottom, only to see on reaching the end the pack and the remaining field streaming across the open downland while the exuberant flat notes of the horn died on the humid November air.

Brush out straight behind him, Blutfang raced low-bellied along the skirt of Pudge Bottom, climbed the slope in full view of the pack, who let out a sudden crashing chorus, the deep-chested music of older hounds, the screaming lustful noise of the untried, who knew nothing except that there was blood in front of them ; then the red streak disappeared in the scrub of gorse and elders. They gave him no law, they pushed him along at a pace that would mean his end if he found no respite soon. He was pressed too hard to have time to cast about for earths of whose whereabouts he was not so sure as those which lay beyond Buckland Bank.

He bore left-handed to cut across the lower sheep-slopes and make for Balmer Wood, but a whip headed him and, turning back, he raced up the long gallop, scarlet and rat-catcher, chestnut and grey, and black and white and tan, flecking the grass behind him.

The muffled thunder of hoofs and the frenzied chorus of the pack harassed him as he bellied under a gate. Moist-

eyed stirks stared in wonderment and then turned and fled, kicking their heels.

Blutfang stole into the field of glossy-leaved roots lying on the brow of the Bank. Rain-leavings matted his heaving sides. The gate rattled behind him and the pack poured through. Some bellied under the wire that was festooned with wisps of soiled wool. Wet leaves thrashed. Moisture and the earthy smell of mangolds took the potency from the fox-taint.

Then Blutfang, three-quarters downfield, streaking along the furrows, belly touching earth, caught another scent, the scent of his own kind. He ran quickly on and overtook another fox on foot, a vixen of the year, slow to be roused by the clamour. Blutfang ran past her and then turned deliberately away. He crept along a ditch at right-angles to the field, slunk across the cattle-track, down which the field thundered, while the pack lashed through the leaves, in full cry after the vixen who, until they killed in the cart-shed of Mary's Farm, after four miles on the grass, no one knew was not the same fox that had been hallooed away from the Squares.

Crouching, panting, loll-tongued, Blutfang went through the straggling belt of thorn and ash that flanked the mounds where ancient men lay sleeping dustily, towards an earth he knew well in the gorse wilderness on Balmer Down. But when he reached there he found the earth stopt, and well stopt, with thick soil-cemented stakes. He would have stolen away to Balmer Wood, but when he had lain awhile in the gorse he heard the noise of hounds in the distance; for after they had rolled the vixen over they came back and were ringing round the neighbourhood for many hours, and so Blutfang lay up where he was.

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Blutfang slept intermittently all day in the tangle of gorse

and bramble. He lay there long after the departing sun had shown briefly out of a dull sky, an angry ball, gleaming like red syrup behind the tall naked black trees of Ridge Farm. Once, at noon, a charm of goldfinches had come in drooping jerky flight to rest in the brambles, uttering their sweet liquid calls of happiness. And towards milking-time when a barking dog made him raise his head, he saw through the network of gorse a kestrel suspended, wings quivering and tail outspread as she watched for shrews.

Sometimes his body twitched in sleep and once his hind legs worked and his breath came quickly as he ran from hounds again.

When the robins had ceased their dittering and their plaintive winter song; when the last rattling magpie had laboured on short wings from the root-field; and the rooks of Stanmer had straggled homewards cawing their contentment; then the doglike twitching was evident no longer. Blutfang had awakened.

His slant eyes opened and blinked into the brief dusk, but for a while he lay curled, listening. Then he stretched where he lay, head pressed into shoulders, back arched, legs pushing out rigidly, mouth drawn wide in a grin. He relaxed, raised a sharp head, yawned and flickered a long tongue at his lips, got lithely up, and stretched again, quickly, in the cramped space of the gorse hollow, two legs at a time, one hind, one fore. He squatted down and scruffed behind an ear.

Blutfang's nostrils quested delicately. The air was raw-tainted with fog. The upper sky was heavy with it. There would be no stars, nor would the moon last long that travailed ember red in the south-east. Smoke of trimmings hung faintly over the wet grass—down by the faulty bottomed dewpond a bonfire glowed dully. Tim Heppell

was working late. He had been hedging and ditching and should have been done by teatime, but when the hounds streamed by he had flung down billhook and twirg and followed them hallooing like Sexton Langdon the night he saw the corpse-candles.

Cow-smell was evident: heifers and stirks had grazed round the gorse that afternoon, and Blutfang, knowing them well, had opened only an eye when he heard their noise. There was the smell of damp trees and the goodly smell of loamy leaf-mould coming from the edge of the bank where the ground fell quickly away like a terrace. And rabbit, too, rabbit, rabbit, rabbit; even in the raw atmosphere their taint was sometimes loud.

The muffled noise of the farm drifted up; the sudden rattle of pails and cooler in the dairy, the eager squealing of pigs, the squeal of anguish as a gaitered leg swung irritably, the baying of a dog staring at the smouldering moon. The fox loped out of the gorse tangle and away down the east side of the bank.

He padded silently over the short resilient turf. Old ant-mounds and mole-tumps pocked the earth. Once Blutfang paused and sniffed casually at a scar of new-dug fine soil where a mole had tunnelled out while he was yet six paces away. The killer of worms had fled when his sensitive body caught the earth-tremors of the fox's coming.

At the foot of the bank ran a post-and-rail fence. Here Blutfang had a rubbing-post. Red hairs clung to the rifts of the barkless woodwork. Blutfang sniffed speculatively, but there was nothing of interest; only the white and yellow droppings of a crow who had curst him in the morning. He rubbed back and flank against the smooth post. He grunted quietly and his brush flicked in the ecstasy of the crude pleasure that all animals enjoy.

This time was to the hunters. Owls were crying over in the Grove, the woodland strip that groped up the side of the downs and halted abruptly half-way as though weary of its climb. The owls quartered while they could : coming was deep fog and a fret from the sea that would send the small hunted creatures of hedgerows and paddocks into cover, the voles and the sleek woodmice and the vicious shrews, for they did not like the wet. Blutfang padded into the damp wind, his whole mind and body centred on food.

Slaan the stoat, the hunter of blood, was on the trail of a rabbit. The cony had run for fifty yards, growing feebler every lollop with the fear that gripped him in the spine. As he came abreast of the gnarled crab-apple trees that flanked the clump of brushwood on the edge of the bank, he crouched in the grass, incapable of further effort. Ears lay on back ; blunt head pressed against sloping earth ; brown eyes started and were wet with terror which he could not understand but could only feel.

Slaan came up in long sinuous ambling movements, seeming to travel upon the tips of the grass. His mask was merry and his eyes intent. He came up quietly and fastened on the rabbit's neck behind one of the silky ears, and hung on while his prey jerked and kicked.

The fox heard the death squeal, being less than thirty yards away. His ears pricked forward, and for the briefest moment while his nerves ran he halted, forepaws excitedly kneading the turf. Then he swerved away, bellied under the wire and hastened to commit robbery.

Slaan chattered furiously at the intruder and his little eyes shone. His small rage was useless. He was scarcely as long as the fox's brush. Slaan could hate—with every nerve of his lithe tense body—but that was all. His little

mask wrinkled in lines that gathered at his nose, revealing the needle-teeth which had been cutting through to the rabbit's jugular. He continued to yakker as he held off; his snarls were as the dry sound of flints being struck together. *Chakka-kak, kakka-chak. . . .*

Blutfang ignored him. The coming of the fox had stirred the cony into half-hearted action, but before he had ambled four lollops, Blutfang was on him.

The enraged stoat would not go. He hung around while the fox fanged his kill. The smell of let blood and warm flesh drove him almost to frenzy; he wove round ceaselessly, curving like a red-brown snake; and his small flat darting head, too, was like a snake's. But he dared not approach too close, however much his quivering anger drove him. Once, though, he did find himself near: blood-fascinated, he stole up over the ant-mound and chunnered in Blutfang's face. The fox moved; Slaan fled away.

But Blutfang had not reckoned with Slaan's kindred. Eight months before, in April, when the busy-ness of the wild folk is increased twentyfold, Slaan's mate had borne a litter of six blind helpless ravenous young. Her nursery she had made in the nesting-hillock of a mole, after killing the black-coated mother-tenant, who had lined the round nest with dry grass and moss, and crab-apple leaves that the winds of the previous autumn had shaken down. The six young flourished; their eyes had opened; summer months passed; they grew into slim lithe images of their parents, exact from small merry mask and red-brown fur, yellowish-white belly and long-haired black-tipt tail. Milk-days soon passed: flesh-and-blood was tastier, and at that time of year when moths quap soft wings against unfurling dogrose petals, the banks and the hedgerows began to

suffer a terror which no gamekeeper checked ; for Tim Heppell's master shot over his own land and that but seldom, being an old blood-heavy man who preferred the smell of his kitchen to the scent of open air in his nostrils.

And so, long after hunting-lessons were over and the full-grown young (except for two ; one of whom had been killed by an irate sow when he invaded her sty in pursuit of rats, and another whom Peturr Teape had scythed in half when he was cutting the lank grass of the orchard) did their own hunting, the family had not separated : they could live in peace here and the place stank warmly of rabbit even after Tim Heppell had brought his ferrets hither. Now often four or five of them would spend the daytime within a few yards of each other, in bolt-hole and tree-root hollow.

Slaan had taken the rabbit very close to the stoat-haunt. Several of them heard the death squeal, and like all their kith, they were of an inquisitive nature. They hurried towards the place, and when they came nearer, out of bank and bramble-tangle and wurzels they heard small anger-cries, the irate chakker of Slaan. They rippled closer to see what was going on. Their little bodies were consumed with a curiosity that allowed them no rest.

Perceiving them near, Slaan threw tongue again, calling upon them to support him. Neither he nor they remembered that ordinarily any attempt to approach his kill would have been the making of a violent fight, equalled only by the frenzies of mating-time. At the moment, however, the outraged Slaan was glad of help. He raised his head to the sky and went off into a gibber of snarling.

When the other stoats smelt flesh and blood, they too became excited. Snakelike and dainty, they drew close, sniffing nervously, appreciating the scent, appreciating it so

much indeed that they let it drift delicately to their twitching nostrils rather than draw deeply of it.

Noticing the increased odour of stoat, Blutfang looked up, without raising his head. He gnawed sideways like a dog. A bone splintered under his grinders. He heard the faint rustlings in the wet grass and became aware of tiny eyes that gleamed greenly like tiny furtive jewels in the uncertain primeval light of the moon. He paused, glaring out over his meal.

He was afraid of no single stoat ; but this sudden appearance puzzled him and left him uneasy. He lowered his head to go on feeding, but all the time his slant eyes covertly watched the group. Presently he realised that the green specks, which seemed to float and flicker like idle-flying fireflies as the stoats pattered restlessly about, had drawn closer. The little blood-hunters had no idea of helping each other ; they were driven almost mad by the intoxicating smell of blood, so that they became oblivious to danger. Yet within a few minutes each could have killed his own prey in the labyrinthine warrens of Buckland Bank.

Not even the body of Slaan, the largest, was as long as Blutfang's black-tipt brush, but the supple slim beasts disturbed the fox so much that, suddenly enraged, he left the rabbit and made a rush at the intruders, slashing left and right with quick fencings of his head. The circle broke before the onslaught. Blutfang trod on one and it bit him in the pad. He seized another, and even as its back was broken it tried fiercely to fix its needle-teeth into his snarling lip. Another one, Slaan, fastened on to the skin between leg and side, then, chakking, fled with the rest. But they were full of fight, none fiercer. Like their brother who lay dying, they would have fought till death stayed their efforts. Their rage was demoniacal now, and when

the fox followed them they turned and harried him in their little way. If they were to be killed they would deal out hurt first. Blutfang chopped right and left, but whenever he chopped at a stoat, that one was not there. They were nimble as a dancing whip-thong.

Prudence cooled their tempers and they fled into the fastness of brambles and blackthorns. The fox pursued them there. They were gone, down under roots or in the tunnels of other wild folk. Blutfang crashed through the undergrowth, the brambles who still kept some of their broad rough leaves, yellow and empurpled.

He bellied out on the far side and, loping back under the wire, made towards his meal. The rabbit had disappeared. Puzzled and still angry, he circled round. He smelt blood and stoat. He halted, tongue aloll, his paw smarting from the stoat's teeth. Muzzle to ground he sniffed his way to where the rabbit had lain, and he found another scent. The taint of badger. . . . He stared upwind. Down the slope a heavy indistinct shape padded leisurely. Greys and blacks and whites merged into the dying light of the moon, choked into impotence by the gathering fog.

While Blutfang wasted time with the stoat pack, an old boar badger who dwelt in the ancient chalky setts that ran into the flank of Shard Bottom had sallied out, hungry, along tracks worn bare by years of use. He hated the fog and the fret, but rain had kept him indoors for two nights previously and his belly had cried out in protestation.

He had heard the sound of battle as he lumbered and grunted through the gorse wilderness. Being by nature peace-loving he would have avoided it; but then he had smelt flesh and blood near by, and he, too, had an eye for

the main chance. He ambled up while the running fight went on a dozen yards away.

An angry animal obeys first impulses. Blutfang went shadowing after the humpling form. The old boar halted and turned quickly. A long pied head swayed slightly as he waited resolutely, unwilling to retreat while the fox was at his back. Small eyes stared at Blutfang. Below the pig-like eyes and the neat striped face, long iron-strong jaws were ready to give Blutfang more than he could give in return. He swerved aside. He stood for a moment regarding the sturdy body in front of him, as if sizing up his chances. His broad-based triangular ears cocked forward ; his sharp muzzle wavered out enquiringly, drinking in the taint he knew so well. Then, aware of the folly of showing fight, he wheeled about with a flick of his rage-swollen brush and loped away into the gloom of the fog-haunted downland. The opportunist had been outdone.

MY GARDENS OF THE FAR EAST.

BY ETHEL IRVING.

SOME people are born with gardens, some achieve gardens and others have gardens thrust upon them. When I arrived in North Borneo as a bride I was dumped, without choice, into the last category, but soon determined to achieve, some time or somewhere, an individual garden of my own.

My first attempt began with a plot of ground, garden it could hardly be termed, that surrounded our Government bungalow, perched for coolness on a slope of one of the little hills of Sandakan. Thick, dark-green jungle lay piled behind and tall coconut palms sobbed and swayed round the barn-like house on stilts overlooking a dreary valley.

In my enthusiasm I at once began to make beds in which to sow the English seeds I had brought, expecting in such a steamy heat to see marvellous results in a very short time. A few sickly young plants struggled up only to die and we discovered too late that the newly-dug beds had quickly reverted to a mass of fibre—coconut matting in fact, from the roots of the palms. So there was nothing for it then but to try a flower-pot garden. In the Chinese shops we bought some very attractive blue and white porcelain pots and, with contributions of cuttings from kind neighbours, a row of gaily-flowering plants on shelves around the large verandah helped to dispel the jungle's gloom. They were bright spots, too, on those days of deluge when flower-beds would have been washed away into the valley below which soon became a quagmire of yellow mud in the rainy season.

We found we had to do most of the gardening ourselves in those early days. Although alleged gardeners were supplied to us by Government, they were merely incompetent and very lazy coolies. In a vicious circle these *tukang kabun* revolved; they were flung out and passed on from one more or less long-suffering garden owner to another, till they were landed, to their own complete satisfaction, on some bachelor who was away all day in office. In this safe haven the gardener could hack at the grass and sweep away the much-needed humus from hibiscus and alamanda when he felt really energetic or dose peacefully, knowing there was no ubiquitous *mem* to drive him back to work.

As there were no nursery gardens or seedsmen in Borneo a would-be gardener had to rely entirely on the generosity of friends for seeds and cuttings, although few of us knew the names of many of the tropical plants. Tempting seed catalogues in comic English from Indian merchants were generally found to be expensive frauds and 'Love's labour lost' was too often the epitaph of many frail English seedlings.

When we attained our seventh and last garden, where we were left in peace for seven years, I had learnt a good deal about Eastern gardens. I realised how much wiser it was to cultivate the lovely flowering trees, shrubs and creepers which grew without much difficulty and thus to avoid so many discouraging attempts with English annuals. Much as one might long for them, they will never get acclimatised to the tropics.

The previous Resident had left many of the jungle trees standing when the new Residency was built and we reaped the benefit, for those young saplings thrived. Soon a stately row of tall Tamassu trees shaded the lawns; their gorse-scented clusters of creamy flowers perfumed the air and my

visitors would ask where such a delicious scent came from. Feathery Albizzia trees, whose grey boles resembled beech trees, were always a cool pleasure, especially when their fluffy white flowers lay like snowdrifts along the branches. Most refreshing, too, was the Acacia with raspberry-pink trusses of almond-scented flowers among bright green foliage. A new word is badly wanted to describe the exquisite mauve-blue of the Jacaranda tree, its leafless boughs flower-laden against the sky. These are only a few of the trees that can brighten a big garden ; the vermilion of the Flame trees, the buttercup yellow of the Angsenna and a host of others grow with very little trouble.

Amongst the many shrubs *Petrea* was almost my favourite. Perverse and very shy of flower, but when it chose to riot, it veiled my pergola in a blue mist, softening the *Bougainvillæa*'s rosy purple. Big bushes of *plumbago* planted in tubs along the drive spread its blue sheen even on the hottest days, for it revelled in drought. Rangoon creeper, the Drunken Tailor as I preferred to call it, supported itself by clinging to the dark-brown wood of the balcony—a riot of white starry flowers changing to pink during the day, like the ethereal double hibiscus that opens pearly-white and is deep rose by the afternoon.

One had always to find a corner somewhere in the garden for the Bunga Tonquin, an insignificant climber whose leaves almost covered clusters of cowslip-like flowers clinging to its stem and drenching the air in sweetness ; a few of these flowers floating in a shallow vase smelt delicious in a room—never cloying, or too sickly, like the tall pink and white lilies, waxy gardenias or oleanders.

Moon flowers, a giant *convolvulus* whose pure white discs refuse to open till six o'clock each evening, required a full moon to show them off to perfection. The gleam-

ing white of the *Phalænopsis* orchid showed up best, too, in moonlight against the darker tree stems where hung their graceful sprays, winding yards of wire-like roots firmly round the trunk.

The little Pigeon orchid flourished if planted in coco-nut husks, to hang on trees and be carried into the house when they flowered for just a day about every three months. How obliging a coincidence that they chose Armistice Day in 1918 to send forth their myriads of white doves, smothering every long spray ! Their coco-nut shells were promptly brought in to hang as an appropriate decoration when the big verandah was filled to overflowing with Chinese, Japanese, Indians and natives, who streamed up to the Residency to hear of the triumphant end of the Great War. In the rapidly-falling twilight of the tropics the little emblems of peace gleamed like ivory.

But orchids and flowering trees couldn't give me enough flowers for daily cutting for the house, so lemon and pink cannas, nearly always in flower, were planted to make gay, upstanding borders on the lawn and look splendid in tall vases. Zinnias, sturdy and showy, were useful, too, for cutting, but a zinnia has much the same effect on me as a primrose had on Peter Bell !

Beds full of yellow and white cosmos splashed colour against the distant blue of the China Sea on one side or a purple range of hills outlining the plains below on the other side of our ridge. Among all the different hillside gardens I have worked in, this was certainly the loveliest of them all, though it now exists for me only as a garden of dreams. But garden-makers dream always—of the past or of the future—and some day perhaps I may have a garden where dearly-loved English flowers will thrive as they never could in all my Eastern gardens.

FORTY YEARS ON.

(1822.)

FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF
COUNT MANNTEUFFELL.¹

TRANSLATED BY MRS. HAROLD SANDWITH.

These Extracts from the 'Diary' of Count Mannteuffell, who revisited England in 1822, as a man of sixty, are of interest, as showing the changes that had taken place during the interval of forty years since his first visit in 1781, when he was a young man of nineteen.

In the meantime the French Revolution had shaken Europe, Napoleon had appeared and disappeared, together with the great figures of Pitt and Fox and Burke whose eloquence had excited young Mannteuffell's admiration in the House of Commons, forty years before. Count Mannteuffell, now a man of mature age, looks back somewhat wistfully on the past, on the days of greatness and splendour which he contrasts with the levelling tendencies of an industrial and democratic order of things.

What will strike the thoughtful reader, in these days when Tsarist Russia is represented as steeped in barbarism and ignorance, is the high degree of culture of the diarist himself and his references to his native land, as the home of culture and of intense intellectual life. It is also noteworthy that this man, a native of the Baltic province of Estonia, feels himself entirely Russian—that the antagonism between the Baltic States of Russia proper is of more recent origin and was undoubtedly due to the rise of Prussia and of her policy of expansion, and the consequent suppression of German culture in the Baltic provinces by Russia.

¹ 'A young Russian in London 1781' appeared in CORNHILL, April, 1936.

The object of Count Mannteuffell's second journey was to study municipal and agricultural life in the provinces and in Scotland and Ireland rather than to plunge, as he had done before, into the vortex of social life of London, where Princess Lieven, the great political intriguer, was now at the height of her popularity.

The description of the famous ball, given by Châteaubriand, then French Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, for the Princess of Denmark, with which this extract from the 'Diary' concludes, is particularly interesting, as it is apparently the only account in existence by an eye-witness, besides that of Châteaubriand himself, in the 'Memoires d'Outre-Tombe.'

I LEFT Paris early in June and rapidly traversed those fertile provinces of northern France whose smiling aspect has so frequently been described by travellers.

The inns of Calais are very comfortable and already resemble those of England by their cleanliness. As I had to wait for high-tide to embark on the steamboat, I strolled about the town, admiring in front of the Town Hall the artistic busts of the Connétable de Bourbon and of Cardinal Richelieu—the former triumphant with the sword—the latter with the pen.

It was a very fine day and the coast of England clearly visible. One realises that an upheaval of Nature must have severed these two coasts, a hypothesis which is confirmed by the remains of animals, discovered recently.

At high-tide I went on board the steamer. These steamboats are a kind of ambulant Hotel. In fine weather everybody is on deck; curiosity, idleness, or boredom dispose men and women to seek the company of their fellow-men, and the varying degrees of *savoir faire* divide people into little groups.

The servants on board are, as is to be expected of people

on the confines of two neighbouring realms, shrewd, crafty, ever on the watch, studying your means, trying to guess your intentions—and afford an amusing study of human nature which shortens the tedium of the crossing.

The tide, a moderate wind, and the power of steam favoured us, and everybody was pleased to land after only two hours and a quarter.

On approaching the English coast a multitude of objects strike the observing traveller. These cliffs of semicircular formation, of dazzling whiteness and so steep as to seem unapproachable, have by the ingenuity of man been crowned with a strong castle and fortifications. On entering Dover harbour, one realises at once what it would mean to take these heights by assault.

The innumerable mastheads which hide the town, the well-dressed people on the quays, the elegance of the women, everything denotes the opulence of the town and country. The landing was easy, the quays are paved with flag-stones—in short, I found everything which I had missed in Calais.

I took the usual precaution of showing myself generous and was thus immediately attended to at the Customs, conducted to the best hostelry in the town, recommended to the proprietor and shown into a private sitting-room. I had handed my passport to the Captain, giving as reference our Ambassador, and so everything was in order, and after tea I went for a walk up to the Castle which is one of the show-places for travellers.

Elegance and cleanliness, which seem the general hallmark, greeted me everywhere. I had appreciated them so much on my former visit that the impression had never been effaced. Newly-erected baths embellish the beach ; the ancient Castle is still inhabited—one of the royal Princes spent the season here recently, which has made Dover fashionable.

The guide whom I had asked for what use the *casemattés* served to-day, replied jokingly : ' They are the Customs Officers' *lookouts* ; for they continue their warfare while we are living in profound peace.'

The harbour is of medium size, but offers every facility to shipping. The hurrying passengers, followed by porters whom I saw coming and going, contrasted strangely with the slow movements of the sailors. The regularity and rapidity of the steamboats has given a new character to the crews of steam vessels, in marked contrast to those of sailing boats.

After a comfortable night and after being shown over the harbourworks by the engineer, to whom my friends, Gen. Bentham and Mr. Taylor, had given me a letter of introduction, I left the following morning, having booked a place the evening before, in a coach which the host recommended to me as being the best.

The waiter and the Boots had packed my trunks and handed them to the driver who generally locks up the baggage entrusted to him, knowing that he will receive a gratification.

Taking an inside place gives you the choice of travelling outside, which most people prefer because of the view. I found a number of fellow-travellers, mostly women. From their appearance I concluded that they belonged to the middle class. Conversation, after a few scrutinising glances, soon became general. I had occasion to admire the tact which this nation of travellers and merchants acquire in their manner of judging strangers. Having told them of my Russian nationality, I saw that they immediately felt at ease. The Emperor's¹ visit to this island has established our prestige which, one feels, is real. And when I told them that I had come to England in order to enjoy the

¹ Alexander I.

charm this country has for all Russians, immediate friendliness was shown to me, and a young woman of pleasing appearance who, until then, had been very reserved, joined in the conversation and seemed to be less alarmed by the jolting of the coach which every now and then threw her up against me !

The narrow valley, with the fine gently downwards sloping road, cut into the rock, shows little gardens and charming cottages where visitors during the bathing season find lodgings, meadows with fine cattle, orchards with fruit trees, planted with great regularity. I am told that fruit here is excellent, especially apples. Farther on, the valley widens, the hills become lower, and presently we passed the first park, with its velvet lawn and beautiful trees which are a proof of the ancient taste of the English for country life. The hop-gardens are very large and the plants of vigorous growth and heavily laden. I must say that after hard exercise nothing restores you so well as a glass of good porter.

The coach was going at a trot, in spite of the rising ground, and the horses showed themselves to be very vigorous, but the great speed necessitated frequent relays. On arrival, the horses take their places themselves—they show more docility and intelligence than continental ones, perhaps because man takes more trouble with them here. The coach-driver, who frequently is the proprietor of the several relays, is promptly served by ostlers who see to the details of harnessing in admirable fashion. Everything is ready in a couple of minutes ; the driver, generally of stout build, jumps into the high seat at one bound, clacks his tongue and the horses are off. My neighbour proved to be the wife of a London business man who had come to Dover to hire a house for the summer. She showed herself very good-natured, corrected my English from time to time and

gave me all sorts of information. Life in London for the middle classes is not as expensive as I had thought. She ended up by talking French with me, and expressed herself with a certain facility.

At the next relay a farmer took the place of another, rather insignificant fellow, and in the course of conversation with my neighbour, in which he took part, he showed a jovial nature. He spoke of farming and of the lowering of prices.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘it is true, and here, where the soil is rich and farming varied and the markets near, we manage to get on by doing without any sort of luxury.’ I saw indeed that the farms on this road were the only objects which reminded me of my England of forty years ago. In every other respect there was very marked progress, especially on the outskirts of the towns, with their elegant houses which seem to be inhabited by well-to-do people. When the spire of Canterbury Cathedral made its appearance, I decided to break my journey there.

This manner of travelling is really like a bird’s flight. From these high coaches you see everything the countryside offers. When travelling in one’s own carriage, one goes more slowly, the hedges impede the view and you miss the conversation and have no chance of obtaining information which the Innkeepers are not able to give.

I was set down at an Inn which had a look of importance. I followed my usual practice and was quickly served with breakfast in a private sitting-room. The drive through the fresh air made me enjoy the strange meal of tea and bacon which suits those who have a long morning before them. I told them I would stay till the next morning and asked for a guide to visit the Cathedral.

No architecture expresses more perfectly than the Gothic

man's desire to rise to his Creator. Even beneath their vaults you feel the awe which divine love inspires. The ancient Greek temples and their semicircular vaults and those modern churches built to imitate them, fix thought and feelings too much on the visible objects of their cult. How much more conscious is one of the presentiment of immortality in the efforts of genius which have produced the Chapel Royal of Cambridge, of Windsor and the cathedrals of York and Lichfield ! These foster the religious spirit of Christianity, that of *recueillement*. Yet I remember having been afflicted within some of these edifices by an admixture of Norman style.

The ancient remains of Canterbury consist chiefly of a few ruined towers and I observed that one of these enclosures had, with great good sense, been arranged as a bowling green with beautifully-kept lawn.

Mine host doing the honour at dinner himself, told me that the silk trade which used to flourish here formerly, is insignificant now and that this applies to other industries also and that with the rapidity of modern travel visitors only stay a few hours in Canterbury.

After having regaled myself with a fowl and oysters, I enjoyed the evening air in the public square, where a Regimental band played national airs. I saw nothing to comment upon—English clothes having now been adopted everywhere, especially in Northern countries—few pretty women, by the way.

Canterbury is lighted by gas, whereas elsewhere dim oil-lamps are still in use.

My place in the coach had been reserved, my coat and umbrella having preceded me. I took my seat outside, as it was a fine day. The clothes of farm labourers, both of men and women, the carts and horses, show that pros-

perity is well established. Everything abroad is mean and poor by comparison. Not that France has not shown similar results under Sully Colbert and Chaptel, I had seen that land, so highly favoured by Providence, engaged in industries and commerce with their Colonies, but too much is sacrificed to glory, to feat of arms, which have, for a long time to come, arrested progress. From Dover onwards I had already observed the diversity of farm utensils in use, and this is necessarily so, since all farmers cling to old methods from prejudice and caprice. The *nouveaux-riches* delight in innovations, from pride. They would like to distinguish themselves from a class which they regard as inferior. This is the case everywhere.

The handsome carriages, fine horses, smart clothes, strike the traveller agreeably, for, as you advance, the cross-roads become more numerous as also the travellers on foot and in carriages.

My neighbour this time happened to be a man of letters. He told me that he preferred the English classics to modern productions, that the erotic style, novels and modern poetry were tiring to the mind and judgment—that the flexibility of genius which conforms to established rules, was no longer appreciated; that boldness and flight of imagination and *indiscipline* were preferred to the literary taste fixed by a Milton, Waller, Prior, Littleton, Pope and Addison: that mediocrity held sway and that the men of talent whom I mentioned, as having known them, had not found successors either in Parliament, at the Bar or in the pulpit. We were talking of this when the slower trot of horses announced that we were going up the hill to Faversham. ‘Now, sir,’ said my companion, ‘you who enjoy seeing our countryside, watch for the sight that you will see in a moment.’

What the countryside had lacked hitherto was water, and suddenly I had before my eyes the Thames and the banks of the Estuary. The sight was ennobled by ships of every kind, moving in all directions, the steamboats being distinguished by a long trail of smoke.

In approaching the Thames, the population becomes denser, and, together with its activity, its results, fine houses, gardens, enclosures, make their appearance. Great use is made of chalk for manuring. The arable soil is very light and it is surprising that centuries of cultivation have left it so shallow.

In all these towns, what profusion of shops, what fine shop-windows, full of plate, porcelain, silks ; well-stocked butcher-shops abound. All this must be for local consumption, for town folk shop in London.

Gravesend made its appearance, and, presently, Chatham and Rochester. The Medway greatly adds to the beauty of the scenery. As I was to receive a permit in London to visit the royal dockyard and the forts, I hurried on. Everywhere my memories of forty years ago were confronted by a new world. At Shooter's Hill and Blackheath, where in those days there was nothing but common, there are now innumerable country houses, vying with each other in luxury and elegance.

We skirted Greenwich Park and someone pointed out the new docks of the East India Company.

It is the suburbs of London with their new buildings and magnificent pavements that impress one most. Once in the old town itself, I only remarked Waterloo and Southwark Bridges which were new to me—all the rest was present to my memory.

A compatriot had told me that opposite the Blenheim Hotel, New Bond Street, I should find apartment, with ex-

cellent people ; and indeed the custom of receiving visitors enables them to serve you with great promptness and attention. I found my hosts particularly efficient. They promised to engage a well-trained valet for me for the next day, a *cabriolet* for my morning drives, and a *barouche* for the evening—everything in the fashion. The landlady undertook to cater for me, and all being settled I sallied forth.

I was in the very centre of high-life. It was three o'clock in the afternoon and I saw elegant carriages with coachmen in wigs, and footmen carrying walking sticks, running in every direction or waiting outside shops. The aristocracy have in England perpetuated the distinctive feudal style of life which, in France, has been effaced by the Revolution. Here everything has been preserved, even bad taste, for it is curious to observe that the English do not know how to dress their servants. There is always something wrong with their liveries, either with regard to colour or to fit. They have not our craze for constant change and so a great deal that is out-of-date remains.

The elderly ladies had goods brought to them to their carriages from the shops by pleasant-looking young men, versed in the art of serving. The younger women, as elsewhere, alighted from their carriages. The young men of fashion are in *cabriolets* or on foot, walking arm in arm, as though confiding to each other the secrets of their intrigues. Few of them are on horseback. I went along Piccadilly to Hyde Park, and there, leaning against the railings, I amused myself with comparing this class of people who live a life of routine and boredom with those of Paris.

The Frenchman always has something stiff about him when on horseback which shows that he is not, like the Englishman, accustomed to long rides. To see these young men one would think that they were merely crossing the

Park on their way to somewhere else. Only as they grow older do they moderate their horses' pace, and only the old gentlemen of very high birth are accompanied by a groom in livery. The carriages and *cabriolets* are as varied in style as are the horses.

Hyde Park has not changed. I found it rather neglected and the lawns badly kept. The Duke of Wellington has his mansion at the entrance of the Park, it is remarkable not for beauty but for size. A colossal statue is destined to remind posterity of this general's glorious feats. It is being erected under canvas, so as to give people a pleasant surprise of a new homage to their hero.

It is easy to walk on these excellent pavements and to lose yourself in thought as everybody keeps to the right, and the lower classes walk on the outside of the kerb, having to fear neither mud nor gutters.

I found my table laid and a turtle soup to regale me. The good quality of the plate and livery in fashionable apartments in London makes everything appetising. Nothing chipped or tarnished or soiled, everything complete and well polished. Neither do the maidservants appear in morning attire, they are dressed more smartly in the afternoon and look spotlessly clean.

A salt-water fish followed—it is commonly cooked without salt and served without a sauce, with only melted butter. A cruet-stand with all sorts of sauces and condiments, is there for everybody to use, according to his taste.

A fowl followed, boiled in water not in stock, as on the Continent, and is therefore not so good. The practice of poultry-keeping is less common in England.

Then followed a pudding or paste with raisins. I had instead a slice of roast beef which here is tender and succulent. For Dessert there was a fruit tart, which I took

good care not to touch. The English do not know how to make them—the pastry is tasteless and heavy, and the fruit too acid. I had some cherries which are good when in season, some cheese and a white Spanish wine—Xeres is generally the least adulterated in London.

There is no more to be said about English cooking. You get the same fare everywhere, except in the Embassies and in a few houses of the aristocracy who employ French *artists*.

I had given my valet a list of my letters of introduction and he took my orders for to-morrow's drive.

English beds have two well-stuffed horsehair mattresses, fine linen and those quilted counterpanes which, even on the Continent, one cannot do without now. If you do not sleep the fault must be your own.

I was pleased with my rooms from the first. Thick carpets, well-polished furniture, everything in good taste, no dust. Elsewhere people are indifferent to dust, here this sign of negligence is avoided. My valet, in a spotlessly-clean, striped cotton jacket, when bringing my breakfast, asked my permission to indicate the order in which to pay my calls. Bankers and business people are visible after noon, and gentry after three o'clock.

A very neat carriage and pair, with a well-turned-out coachman, came at the appointed hour and I began with the early risers and drove through London to the famous Brunel, a first-rate mechanical engineer.

I had a recommendation from a friend, Count Orloff, who had told him that I wanted to visit English workshops. I was shown into the drawing-room and very soon a little man of middle age received me cordially. I told him that I would rely on him for my travelling plans and that I was quite free. 'Very well,' he replied, 'that is what I like, we will discuss it.' He is a Frenchman who

has acquired English self-assurance, but who has preserved the vivacity which is characteristic of his nation and of the nature of his genius.

As it was a fine day, we went to see a sawmill which he had erected near Battersea Bridge. During the war Brunel had applied his inventive genius to the manufacture of footgear and the government, who had encouraged his efforts, has indemnified him. It is well known that the good condition of Infantrymen depends very largely on their boots.

Having made an appointment with Mr. Brunel for another day, I then drove on to call on Mr. Taylor, civil engineer, inventor of a new kind of lighting. I found him in his study. Our conversation turned on my travelling plans, and on my projected visit to Mr. Coke's annual sheep-shearing feast in Norfolk. 'My advice,' he said, 'is for you to go and see two agriculturists: Mr. Curwen and Sir H. Sinclair, more especially as the sheep-shearing feast is no longer held.'

I ended up my day at Covent Garden, where comic opera is being given. Mesdames Tree's and Stephens' fresh voices and charm seemed to indicate progress made in London, but the costumes—— Why not be dressed by a French dressmaker? And as regards grace of gesture and expression, the French are superior; their intelligence is more subtle. Here they are more sentimental, which mars a tragic ending which, by the way, is objected to. On the stage as in mythology prestige must be preserved! . . .

To-day, after visiting the General Post Office and the Royal Mint in the morning, I went about four o'clock to dine on Richmond Hill.

The carriages in use nowadays carry you as on wings. Everything is arranged for speed, and once outside the

suburbs you are carried along by space and the excellent roads. I could see nothing that jars, nothing to annoy—nothing to offend delicate taste. You drive close to the Thames, and enjoy the sight of a variety of craft, well-built pleasure-steamers and luxurious sailing and rowing-boats cross each other in every direction.

How is it that the French lack this taste? One might almost fancy them to be enemies of the water. One wonders where the Suffrens and Thevénauds, the pride of the French Navy, were born. Ought not the French to try and overcome this repugnance by education and nautical displays?

I drove through several suburbs which will soon be joined to the Metropolis, so rapid is their growth, and so numerous are the people who live there to enjoy fresh air in summer.

I went slowly up Richmond Hill, lost in memories. I thought I recognised Lady St. Aubyn's house, at the end of the terrace. There I jumped from the carriage, sending it on to the Star and Garter Inn, which stands on the highest spot and is the *rendez-vous* of Society.

What is there about this view which rouses so much enthusiasm? I asked myself. . . . Certainly, there is the river winding along as one likes to see it, but it is not majestic, and only a few modest rowing-boats give it life. It is in the rich foliage of the fine oaks and in the variety of shapes among these domes of verdure, I think, that one must seek the cause of the impression which this view makes.

Luxury is displayed in the various rooms of the Hostelry. I took one on the second floor, from which the view is extensive. From my balcony I looked out on to the courtyard and the side wings of the building, where brilliant parties of fashionable folk were in progress.

Happy homecomings, successful speculations, are so fre-

quent in this land of merchants that these joyous parties are everyday occurrences, especially during the summer.

I was served with a copious and fairly choice dinner, and drove back through Richmond Park, the gates of which are opened for people of standing. It is undulated; the lawns are well kept, the roads are naturally designed and the trees are dotted here and there, as by a happy inspiration of the landscape gardener's genius. Herds of deer, some close to the roads, others in the distance, animate the scene.

Before these beautiful sites, fruits of peaceful prosperity, I feel inclined to exclaim: 'Frenchmen, how is it that you feel so little need for this kind of enjoyment, you who are so favoured by Nature?'

The next day being very fine I hired a rowing-boat at Westminster Bridge and drifted along with the current, in order to examine the bridges and banks of the Thames.

I cannot excuse this Nation, so zealous and capable of achievement, to have postponed the building of a quay along the Thames, like ours along the Neva. It is easy to imagine what a picture London would offer if fine edifices, mansions, offices, such as an architect would conceive, were built along the Thames. Already the East India and London Docks give an idea of what the national genius of this thoughtful people can produce in this respect. Every town situated on a river ought to develop its principal parts in the direction of the river.

The bridges are all too high, and might have been of lighter construction, for the munificence of Parliament had given the engineers the chance to use the best materials—granite and cast iron. This defect weighed on my mind, which was engrossed in calculating the power of resistance, as I drifted gently along in my gondola.

The object of a bridge is to further the fastest and easiest communication between two banks. The bridge must be level with the skyline of the houses, for if the waters rise to their full height, they no longer run beneath the bridge but overflow into the streets. Any line exceeding this skyline, however, shocks the architect's eye and even common sense. To combine the greatest solidity with lightness is what the engineer must aim at, and this has been achieved with the Neuilly and Jena bridges in Paris. Moreover, the imagination of the beholder must find food, his attention must be arrested. A plain surface would seem to indicate lack of ideas in the engineer. I must criticise these sheets of cast iron on Waterloo Bridge, flanking the arches. It was a mistake not to embellish them with *bas reliefs* of the glorious feats of arms which would thus be impressed upon the memory.

I spent the evening at the Opera and was not pleased with the singing. Nothing distinguished ; and the orchestra, although such artists as Cramer, Ruys, etc., are playing in it, has neither the *ensemble* nor the tone of the Paris one. Moreover, the building is not in modern taste, whereas in Paris the magic of the decorations, of the costumes and of the lighting effects are a great asset. The dresses of the ladies made up for this to some extent—they are stylish although in rather peculiar taste. I did not see many good-looking women to admire. The ballet was what is best compared to Paris.

Our Ambassador, Prince Lieven, was very friendly when I called. Having heard of my arrival, he had asked the French Ambassador's permission to bring me to the ball the latter was giving the following night in honour of the Danish Crown Princess. I explained that I did not want to go much into Society during my fortnight's stay in

London and that I intended to make an extensive tour through the provinces and especially through Scotland and Ireland.

At seven o'clock, I went to call on the Ambassadors. She knows of the very sincere interest I have always taken in her success and she was very charming. She told me how pleased she is with her position which is indeed commensurate to her qualities and talents. Her tact enables her to discern every shade of political tendency and feeling. 'Although you say you have not come to take part in social functions,' she told me, 'you must come to Almacks with me to-night and to-morrow to Mr. Châteaubriand.'

After dinner (which by the way was rather a dull one) I accompanied her to Almacks, where all the fashionable people foregather. It looks exactly as it did forty years ago. A dancing floor, three rows of seats on the right, small mirrors. What obstinacy to keep to old-fashioned mediocrity when in the provinces all the Assembly Rooms show, by their elegance and luxury, taste and progress !

It was pointed out to me, what I had already observed for myself, that the middle class were much more numerous than the nobility. Commerce and industry produce great fortunes, far surpassing those of the old nobility. By the way, our Russian women show to greater advantage in middle age than Englishwomen ; they seem to possess intenser vitality. Here the figures and faces lose their outline and so the grace of feature and of movement disappear more rapidly. Englishwomen have neither the suppleness nor the lightness of Frenchwomen, and this is very noticeable in their style of dancing. The old-fashioned dances showed this less, in fact a slovenly carriage rather suits a Madonna face. But the French dances and the valse expose them to more criticism, and the sylph-like agility, the grace-

ful feet and the expressive movement which distinguish the Frenchwoman will never be acquired by her English sister. There was no mistaking the awkwardness and constraint which the superiority of a Frenchwoman who was dancing caused in her rivals.

The room is much too small for the crowds assembled here. The tickets are only obtainable from the ladies who preside, of whom our Ambassadors is one.

At nine o'clock the following night, I went to our Embassy, to accompany Prince Lieven to the French Embassy. My mind is still impressed with the dignity of an Ambassador. My youth has been spent within the walls, where ostentation and pomp were the order of the day. I need only mention the French Ambassadors, at whose festivities I have been ; such names as those of the Marquis de Joigny, de Verac, Ségur, of Cardinal de Rohan and of de Bernis will give an idea of the brilliancy which was a matter of course.

On entering the vestibule of the Mansion, you were received by a *Suisse*, looking like a kind of Atlas, whose countenance depicted all the magnificence and wealth of his Sovereign. The hall and stairs, transformed into a flower-garden, and the brightness of the lights gave the illusion of summer's day. Numerous liveried servants, chosen for their handsome appearance and whose countenances denoted intelligence, showed you into apartments, furnished with every sort of *objet de luxe*. Gallantry in the commerce between the two sexes, springing from the desire to please, prevented boredom. The numerous Embassy Staff, composed of young noblemen, seconded the efforts of the Ambassador himself, who devoted his attentions to persons of eminence. Animated dancing went on in a spacious adjoining room, where dancers and spectators enjoyed an

equal pleasure. In another room, furnished in the same refined style, card tables were set out for those who had a fancy for a game.

Literary men and artists entertained those who seemed in need of attention by showing them either the Library or objects of art, or curiosities. So the hours passed and the supper marked the final triumph of luxury. It was served on magnificent plate and costly porcelain, and the cook and pastrycook's art vied with one another in providing choice dishes in proof that nothing had been neglected. When the time for departure came, the ground-floor rooms were thrown open for those who awaited the arrival of their carriages, and the police kept order in an exemplary manner.

These were the pictures in my mind as I ascended the stairs of the French Embassy. Suffice it to say that these pictures were not revived.

The Vicomte de Châteaubriand is renowned for his literary works and I share the general feeling of gratitude that in his noble works he has drawn the human mind back to the contemplation essential to our Christian faith.

I admired the graceful dignity of the Princess of Denmark presiding over the ladies who had formed a circle around her. I had already in Paris heard much praise of the Crown Prince's, her consort's, culture. The Ambassador escorted the Princess into the ball-room, where she opened the Ball. Valses and *contrédanses* are the 'fashion' nowadays—as is also the manner of their execution. The word 'fashion' explains everything without further comment. It is supposed that we erstwhile young courtiers wasted too much time on an idle accomplishment. Agreed; but we might retort: 'Do you do anything more useful to-day?'

Among the good-looking women there were two who

distinguished themselves in particular. The Duchesse de Guiche and the Countess Esterhazy. The former has very delicate features and the mobile grace which seems the accompaniment of her thought and feelings. The latter appears to be more thoughtful but with the irresolute characteristic of her nation—a fine figure, great freshness with something perhaps of wistful regret for a brilliant past in her expression. Among the Englishwomen there was one who seemed bent on being noticed: the wife of an East India Company Director, a Mrs. Webb. She was wearing a sort of turban, studded with diamonds, perhaps in fashion at Calcutta, and had with her a young girl with corkscrew curls. *Bizarreries* which seemed to belong to another world, as did also the complexions of the ladies which did not become the rest of their European attire. They were seated on chairs that had been advanced, with a sort of ostentation. This stirred in me all sorts of reflections on the Anglo-Indian colossus which is threatening to collapse. All the chances of this collapse can be calculated: invasion or dissolution, by internal combustion, etc. While it lasts it is a powerful lever for the English Monarchy.

The covers of the supper table not being proportionate to the numbers of guests, I took my departure.

For some time I had before my eyes the spectacle of the roughness and rudeness of the lackeys and coachmen. The confusion was so great that at last I sent for a Sedan chair, abandoning my carriage to the pandemonium of the crowd. . . .

It was now time for me to tear myself from the social life of London and to begin my northward journey. My place having been retained on the Oxford coach, I set out the following morning at five o'clock. . . .

SWORD FOR A WARRIOR.

BY PATRICIA O'NEILL.

It was dark coming out into the passage, and, momentarily unaccustomed to the dimness, she stumbled over an uneven flagstone. To her surprise an icy sweat instantly sprang upon her upper lip, and her breath came loudly.

Even as the woman who walked behind put out a hand to steady her, she stiffened, regained her composure, and walked carefully forwards. It would not do to stumble a second time, for it might appear as if her courage was failing, and, oddly enough, now that the time was near at hand, she felt as firm as steel.

Did other people under the stress of emotion feel as she did, a kind of inward hardening, so that she could stand outside herself and watch her own actions? No, it was not everyone who could do that. She had watched others tremble and shiver, their voices dying away to mere whispers, as if their energies had been crushed by the weight of fear. She was comforted by her own powers.

Her face was blanched, but she knew that the beauty of her dark eyes was enhanced by pallor, and she did not scorn this paleness. Covertly she glanced down at her hands, and was relieved to see that they did not tremble as they held up the folds of her dress, lifting it a little above the rough floor-stones. They were well-shaped hands, she observed, white and firm, like her father's hands.

Perhaps in a good many ways she took after her father, more than her brother did. She forced back the sigh which came so swiftly to her lips. Poor father, but then he would

understand. In time he would come to feel a sort of pride for his daughter who had so distinguished herself. There was no need to explain to him ; he fathomed her, even better than she understood herself.

‘ Careful, my girl,’ that was how he used to caution her, and she could see him standing before the hearth, his legs wide apart, with a triangular patch of fire showing between them.

‘ Careful, my girl, you’ll fly too high, and then——’ He snapped his fingers, like one snuffing out a candle.

‘ You wouldn’t say that to my brother,’ she flared back at him, for they both had tempers, and in her heart of hearts she knew he was right. He seemed to see into her mind where giddy ambitions were already trying to soar. ‘ If I were your son you’d tell me to fly higher, and not try to keep me here like a bird with clipped wings.’

‘ You have all the liberties any other young girl has,’ growled her father, for her retort had stirred in him the old dissatisfaction concerning his son’s lack of ambition. Yes, they knew how to search out each other’s weak spots, those two.

‘ Liberty !’ she scoffed. ‘ A morning ride, a walk in the garden—and there is London where I might go.’ Her eyes shone, and then clouded over when she thought of her plans which were being thwarted.

‘ And if I let you go, I know what would happen. You’d be sent back in disgrace before the month was out,’ sighed her father. ‘ God knows you have a hot heart and high ambitions.’

‘ Are men only to have ambition ?’

The man smiled at her earnestness. ‘ Men know how to keep cool-headed.’

‘ You don’t know me, Father.’ She crossed from the window where she was standing to the hearth, so that she

stood before him, her dark head on the level with his chest. 'I don't let my heart rule me, like other women do, but my mind. That I never let burn.'

Her father guffawed at this confession. 'Then see to it that you keep your heart also cool—it will take all your cleverness to do that.' Still laughing, he turned and left the room to deal with the affairs of men and the large outside world.

Standing by the fire, his daughter kicked at the logs as if they were obstacles barring her progress. Impetuously she turned, and began to pace to and fro. There was no time to waste, a woman was not given perpetual youth.

Hands clenched, she walked towards the window, and stared out. How well she knew the garden, down the steps, along the clipped privet hedge, past the rose bushes surrounding the lawn, and back again to the house. In her youthfulness she could imagine herself for ever pacing that quiet garden, a prisoner at home.

Mother did not understand her. Mother who wanted her to marry and settle down like any other young woman. Settle down ! She could visualise herself fat and dull, and talking only of household accounts and the best way of rearing children.

She'd won, she'd won ! Openly triumphant, she raced to tell her brother the news. Jumping on his bed, she shook him by the shoulders, until he sat up, his eyes bleary, and his hair standing on end.

'I'm going,' she announced. 'Father's letting me go to London. Say you envy me.'

Her brother grunted. What a conceited little pig she was ! For a moment he stared at her, seeing her as a strange man might see her. He realised for the first time that his

sister was good-looking in a dark gypsyish fashion—although he always preferred fair-headed girls—and he became anxious. It was deliberately playing with fire to send anyone with such passionate beauty to London. In her excitement his sister was bouncing up and down on his toes beneath the bedclothes. He would have a game with her.

‘Don’t be such a child,’ he said severely, and delighted to see her pout. ‘Hasn’t Father told you before?’

‘No, he only called me in just now to tell me the news.’

‘I knew all about it last night,’ he lied, trying to damp her exultation. ‘Ha, Miss Know-All, you’re late with the news.’

‘I don’t believe you,’ she stormed, jumping up from the bed, and releasing his cramped toes. Standing beside the bed she eyed him keenly, her hands on her immature hips. ‘If you knew last night you would have told me. You never could keep a secret!’

Without waiting for him to cap this retort, she ran from the room, probably going to disturb some other member of the household to hear her news.

That was like his sister, he thought, as he tried to settle back again among the pillows. She always left the room when he tried to argue with her, but he knew from long experience that she could best him, and his easy-going temperament bore her no grudge.

He had been her faithful shadow since childhood, following her into pranks, and meekly sharing the punishment which followed those escapades. It never occurred to him to protest, or to assert his authority as a brother. To argue with his sister would be to arouse her imperious anger, and he preferred to secretly nurse his occasional irritation than to cause an outburst.

There she was, out in the courtyard below, telling the old

groom the news. What a child she was, but she had always been like that, blind to her selfishness, and willing for everyone to share her joy. He sighed, and drew himself up in bed, knowing that sleep had left him for that morning. Perhaps if he hurried, and found his sister out of doors before breakfast, they could go and feed the horses, as they did when they were children. Now that she was going to London he realised how much he was going to miss her companionship.

As she turned the corner the light in the passageway grew a little brighter, and accustomed to the gloom, she could see walls on either side of her, streaked and glistening with damp. Strange how the musty smell of stones always made her think of Katherine. She had first seen her in a similar passage, when she was new to London, and still felt strange and bewildered. She swiftly curtsied as Katherine came into view, but her coolness had not deserted her, for as she bobbed she took stock of her mistress.

Even the soft dimness could not flatter that sallow face or conceal the sag of the body. The jewels about her neck and wrists were worth a fortune, the brocade of her gown was the richest the curtsyng girl had ever seen, but it only served to accentuate the extreme plainness of its wearer.

Katherine inclined her head stiffly. She always felt nervous when she met strangers, and although her lips were set into a smile, her eyes were watchful, and there was no friendliness in them as she met those of the dark-haired girl. No, she did not like this good-looking stranger; she only served to show up her own middle age. This girl must be kept in the background, or she might be dangerous. Without a word she passed on down the passage, unaware of the other's swift scrutiny.

Poor Katherine, that was how she always regarded her. So out of place in her surroundings, and better fitted for a religious life. A woman who preferred to kneel before the image of a saint than to made an attempt to keep on friendly terms with those about her. She grew to be morose and suspicious, and yet it had been so easy to fool her, and to flirt with her husband right under her nose !

Even now she felt a sense of giddy exultation, when she recalled her first cautious schemings. From the start she knew she would be able to supersede Katherine, but it took time to put those plans into operation : plans so daring that she dared not whisper them to her closest friend. She had to be certain that she could twist Henry around her little finger before she could openly boast.

It had been ridiculously easy to capture that tawny-headed giant who had taken such pains to impress upon her that he was no staid, middle-aged man who had wedded a woman six years older than himself and had forgotten love. He had been pathetically anxious to show her that he was as ardent as the young gallants who clustered about her.

Anyone who had not been as level-headed as herself might have bungled the whole affair, and have been sent packing in everlasting disgrace. How her father would have crowed if she had been sent home ; but she had not bungled, but watched quietly like a cat to see which way the mouse would spring.

Poor Katherine, in her present mood she felt quite sorry for her. It was evident from the beginning that she was doomed to lose in the battle. Katherine who cried and protested so that her sallow face became blotched, and her nose beet-red. She never seemed to realise how men hated fusses, and she went on making them. Shrill and accusing

one day, weeping and hysterical the next. Even her friends were a little relieved when the divorce proceedings were over, and she retired to the country.

People were prejudiced and stupidly old-fashioned about divorces, but she knew that they would never dare to be rude to her face. Cool-headed as ever, she learnt to take control of the power and authority which came her way when she ceased being Henry's mistress and became his wife. The feeling of power welled in her most when he lay in her arms, his head between her breasts, and she stroked his crisp chestnut hair. Such a large blustering man, and she such a small, pale woman, and yet he was her slave.

He overwhelmed her with his love, never allowing her out of his sight. She must ride beside him on his morning canters; sit beside him at the dining-table, and play cards with him in the evenings. Her heart controlled her emotions, and for a time she was content to be submissive to his love, until her mind, perpetually detached, rebelled at this submission.

After a while she found herself inventing excuses to gain some privacy, and she used to reflect ironically that if she had been a religious woman she might have rid herself of Henry for certain intervals during the day on the pretext of praying before a saint. Perhaps Katherine had not been such a dullard after all.

Boredom, that was the root of the trouble. She fought against it desperately, telling herself that she was a woman to be envied, but her reasonings deserted her when she looked at Henry's fattening face, the droop of his thick shoulders, the swelling abdomen. She was married to a sensualist, and she was weary of him. Her thoughts raced inside her head like rats in a trap. Outwardly she was the same, calm and smiling.

When they told her that the child was a girl and not a son, it seemed as if a hand had reached out and extinguished her ambitions. She was left alone in the darkness, and she knew that Henry was disappointed. Perhaps next time it would be a son, he comforted, but there was no next time. It seemed as if disappointment had turned her womb barren, and Henry no longer comforted but stormed. On those occasions she was glad that he had been cheated of an heir.

Ah, how weary she had grown of his fumings, and she no longer tried to coax him back to good humour. She was tired of him, and he was tired of her. She wanted youth, not exacting middle age, and she let her jaded eyes run over the men that were nearest at hand. She would show him whether she was useless and without attraction. No one would ever say she was a second Katherine. 'Cool-headed she had gone to play with fire, feeling the old sensation of exultation.

A gush of fresh air came sweeping up the passageway as they drew back the bolts to open the door. Smiling slightly she stepped out into the sunlight. A perfect morning, with clouds lazily sailing over the tops of the freshly budded trees. Had the time come for her to be afraid? Inwardly she smiled approvingly at herself. No fear, only a sense of great freedom.

So Henry was going to displace her for simpering little Jane, and her enemies were triumphing at her downfall: Oh, yes, she knew what they were saying about her, that she only had herself to blame, and she still might be Henry's wife if she had been faithful.

It was strange how people thought she was defeated. Could they not see, and could not Henry see, that it was she who had triumphed? She had married him as she had intended to do, and when love was dead between them,

she had found love elsewhere. If she had not won Henry would not have troubled to enforce this punishment as his outraged pride demanded. If she had remained defeated, his useless chattel, she would not be walking across Tower Green. Without raising her head, she was aware of people staring at her. She would give them something to talk about before she was finished.

Time now to raise her head. Would her courage fail her? Steadily she lifted her face, staring at the path between the trees. Ahead a knot of men were smiling at her. Her brother, the old teasing light in his eyes, called out.

‘Hurry, sluggard, we’ve been waiting for you all the morning.’

Coming closer, she saw that he was standing with William Brerton, Henry Norris, Francis Weston, and—her heart leaped—there was dear Mark Smeaton, the musician. She trembled ecstatically as she remembered his wooing, lovely lad. Eagerly she stepped forward to greet them.

It was not until she walked towards the executioner’s block that she was filled with surprise. These waiting men had all been put to death by Henry’s orders twelve days ago; they were dead men. Again she looked at them; they were still smiling and beckoning, and she wanted to laugh. Henry had not killed them after all.

What was the day? The nineteenth of May, 1536, when she, Anne Boleyn, Queen of England, had won her greatest victory.

A sudden thought made her stop smiling. Say if Henry found out that he had been cheated of his revenge? She must hurry and be gone, before there was chance to recall her. Silly-witted old man, and there was her brother and lovers waiting for her.

Quickly she folded her well-shaped hands together, and waited for the executioner's sword to sweep through the air. If she were Katherine, she thought mischievously, she would be thinking of Heaven, but she was thinking only of her final victory. She was glad a common axe was not going to sever her head from its slender throat. Swords were meant for warriors.

PARABLE.

*I had my orders. Up the stony hill
I was to climb, until I reached the peak ;
Towards the stars I was to set my will.
For such a task I felt my powers were weak.
Yet He who sent me forth, He called me back
Before I went a yard, and bade me take
A heavy shape of iron lest I should lack
A burden to be carried for His sake.
I murmured ; but He would not ease the load,
Which ruefully I shouldered. By-and-by
I found a fall of rock across my road,
Barring my pilgrimage towards the sky.
I eyed that load I could not understand—
And lo, I held a pickaxe in my hand !*

EVA NENDICK.

FEMININE FICTION.

BY FRED B. MILLETT.

IN the welter of English novel-writing since the end of the World War, no fact is more striking than that most of the novelists, at least of a secondary order, have been women. Some of these women have maintained or modified reputations already well founded when the War broke out ; others belong to the hapless War generation that, if it survived at all, was faced with the dilemma of losing one world and adjusting itself to another ; finally, there are the women novelists whose formative years coincided with the disorienting conflict, who have expressed themselves more and more vigorously in the field of the novel, and who are threatening the positions of some at least of their elderly contemporaries.

Of the women novelists who have had to face the problem of maintaining or strengthening their positions in the post-War world, May Sinclair has been the most sensitive to the æsthetic and intellectual influences of the later period, and the most willing to modify her attitudes and practices in fiction. In the reign of King Edward the Seventh, Miss Sinclair had already made a reputation for herself with so traditional and solid a piece of fiction as *The Divine Fire* (1904), and even as late in the War as 1917, she showed in *The Tree of Heaven* little more than the conventional though poignant response to the atmospheric changes of these fearful years. But when *Mary Olivier* appeared in 1919, it was apparent that something had happened to Miss Sinclair's view of life and of fiction. This brilliant novel

revealed two new influences upon her work: that of psychoanalysis on the interpretation of her material and that of the stream-of-consciousness on her technique. The source of the latter influence is apparent from her outspoken admiration for the experimental work of her younger contemporary, Dorothy Richardson. Miss Sinclair's post-War work illustrates the assimilation and the development of these influences. In *The Romantic* (1920), the assimilation is crude and imperfect. *Anne Severn and the Fieldings* (1922), exciting as was the initial impression it made, now seems unduly case-historical in method. But in *Life and Death of Harriet Frean* (1922) and *A Cure of Souls* (1924), the new tools have been mastered, and with these Miss Sinclair has been able to build a new, if perhaps not so solidly founded, reputation for herself.

Ethel Sidgwick, whose first novel, *Le Gentleman*, appeared in 1911, seems to have attained æsthetic maturity at a single bound, and since that time she has not found it necessary to modify her point of view or her methods in any fundamental respect. In consequence, her work, distinguished and subtle and delightful as it is, gives a slightly unfortunate impression of being a quiet back-water in the turmoil of contemporary fiction. Here are well-made novels in the pure and lofty Henry James tradition. Her surfaces are brighter and more colourful than James's; her wit is commingled with humour, and to her special interest in musicians and children and animals she brings a deeply and delightfully feminine insight and appreciation.

Of the other women novelists who had taken some steps in the direction of establishing a reputation before the War, Marie Belloc Lowndes, Rose Macaulay, and Sheila Kaye-Smith still continue to attract considerable critical attention. Before the outbreak of the War, Mrs. Belloc

Lowndes's still popular novel *The Lodger* (1913) exemplified the genre to which she was to devote herself henceforth with conspicuous success. This was the psychological mystery-story in which the interest lies, not so much in the solution of the crime as in the character of the criminal involved. Thus, in the *Story of Ivy* (1928) she confined herself to telling the tale from the point of view of the criminal, and in *Letty Lynton* (1930) she ventured to plumb the psychological depths of a famous early nineteenth-century crime of passion. Rose Macaulay, to be sure, did not achieve wide popularity until the appearance of *Potterism* in 1920, but by that time she had discovered her own particular forte, the satirical novel, and, in the next decade or more, she was to produce numerous illustrations of her essentially satirical view of the human situation. Like the perennial satirist, Miss Macaulay is on the look out for folly in any guise, and she touches off with a nice malice the extremities of absurdity which she has witnessed or imagined. She is especially fond of ranging over the generations, as in *Dangerous Ages* (1921) and *Told by an Idiot* (1923), in order perhaps to demonstrate that folly is not the exclusive possession of any particular period or age. In *Orphan Island* (1924), she joined hands for the moment with the fantasists, to a consideration of whom we shall turn presently.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith's forte is not satire, but regionalism, religion, and feminism. Her regionalism, in this case that of Sussex, not so profound as Hardy's, but vigorous and colourful, is illustrated best by *Sussex Gorse* (1916), the progenitor of a long line of novels dramatising the passion for the soil. Her feminism, unhysterical as it is, is to be seen in *Joanna Godden* (1921) and *Joanna Godden Married* (1926). Her early interest in religion is manifest in her first novel, *The Tramping Methodist* (1908), but her own

personal development into Catholicism is reflected further in *The End of the House of Alard* (1923) and in her poems, *Saints in Sussex* (1923).

The women novelists of the War generation were forced to find a footing in a world shaken with violence, riddled with uncertainties, and threatened by disasters of the most appalling variety. On some of them, as on some of the men who survived the conflict, the experience left permanent and conspicuous scars. Almost none of them has been so unwise as to choose the War itself as material for her fiction, but in the work of almost every one of them, there are rumblings of the thunder of war. Storm Jameson, alert from the first to the movements of our time and courageously outspoken in her judgments of them, has found her most fruitful subjects in the experiences of her shipbuilding family in her own and earlier generations, and her treatment of the rise and decline of this local industry is coloured, as in the trilogy, *The Triumph of Time* (1927-31), with a strong and impassioned feminism. In her most recent work, she seems bent on an even more serious representation of the social and emotional experiences of the generations with which she is familiar, a task that seems to have become a sort of compulsion upon men and women who survived the War. To the novel as social history, Miss G. B. Stern brings her own special point of view, that of a Jewish cosmopolitan background and experience. Above her sprightly pot-boilers stands out her work in the genealogical novel, made popular by Thomas Mann and John Galsworthy. Thus her best work is to be found in *Tents of Israel* (1924) and *A Deputy Was King* (1926).

Of the other woman novelists of the War generation, E. M. Delafield, Clemence Dane, and Dorothy Richardson deserve some critical consideration. Miss Delafield's early

work was unquestionably stimulated by her varied patriotic activities during the War years. She did not, however, view all her co-workers with a loving eye. For, like Miss Macaulay, Miss Delafield is of a satirical temperament, though the field over which her keen and malicious observation plays is narrower than Miss Macaulay's. Miss Delafield's special target, as the title of her novel, *The Pelicans* (1918), suggests, is feminine egotism masking itself as self-sacrifice, and she has not found it difficult to accumulate illustrations of this devastating principle in herself and her contemporaries, British and American. Clemence Dane is less conventional in her response to contemporary life than Miss Delafield and more independent in her life and art. An experimenter in the forms and varieties of drama, whether realistic or poetic, she has made her novels a series of experiments in the presentation of her favourite subjects, modern woman and the theatre. Her first novel, *Regiment of Women* (1917), was a courageous study of ingrown feminine psychology, and *Legend* (1919) combined the penetration of the earlier novel with an interesting technical compression. The best known of her recent novels, *Broome Stages* (1931), applies the methods of the genealogical novel to the world of the theatre with which Miss Dane has had a variety of energising contacts.

Of the women novelists of the War generation, Dorothy M. Richardson had had perhaps the most marked influence on the later Georgian period. With *Pointed Roofs* (1915), Miss Richardson embarked upon a literary experiment of the greatest importance for contemporary fiction. This novel was the first of an apparently unending series of volumes devoted to depicting the subjective and objective adventures of a young woman whose name, Miriam Henderson, is significantly identical rhythmically with Miss

Richardson's. The distinction of Miss Richardson's method is that the life-history of her heroine is presented without intermission from within the mind of the woman herself. This psychological method differs, however, from that of Henry James, in that it is descriptive rather than analytical. It is a psychic stream in which the elements are sense-impressions, bodily sensations, emotions, observations, thoughts, and ideas. The rich potentialities of this method are indicated by the fact that Miss Richardson has up to the present devoted twelve volumes to her heroine's career, and the end is not in sight. Despite the great technical interest of the *Pilgrimage* series, however, it suffers as a piece of creative fiction from the fact that Miss Richardson's heroine is too dull, too immoderately introspective a figure to sustain one's interest through a dozen volumes. But the gallant venture continues to have, as we shall see, a fructifying influence upon major and minor Georgians alike.

In the productions of the women-novelists of the post-War period, one is confronted with an embarrassment of riches that makes one intensely conscious of the extent to which the field of at least secondary post-War fiction has been pre-empted by women. Of the older women writers who have come into view in the years since the War, at least a half-dozen call for critical attention. Stella Benson (1892-1933) in *Living Alone* (1919) and *The Far-Away Bride* (1930) wittily created a world of her own by combining alert observation and a peculiarly feminine variety of fantasy. Fantasy indeed is the hall-mark of the work of several of Miss Benson's approximate contemporaries. Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Lolly Willows* (1926) marked her as of the elect. In this novel, the transition from the world of appearance to the world of reality is made by almost imperceptible degrees; in consequence, the reader

is won unwittingly to acquiesce in the intervention of the supernatural and, with the heroine, is easily convinced that what appear to be powers of darkness are actually the powers of light. *Mr. Fortune's Maggot* (1927) had an equal grace and comeliness of utterance and an even greater infusion of quiet satire. In *The True Heart* (1929) she played with not quite complete success with the theme of purity of spirit in the subnormal. The novels of Edith Olivier—*The Love Child* (1927) and *Dwarf's Blood* (1931)—show many of the characteristics of Miss Warner's: wit, sensibility, and delicacy of style, with an additional flair for the quaint and eccentric and a decided vein of the Gothic and macabre. Miss Sackville-West's career as a novelist began with *Hermitage* in 1919, but it was only with *The Edwardians* (1930) and *All Passion Spent* (1931) that her subject-matter defined itself and she began to attract fairly wide attention. Writing out of the most distinguished British aristocratic inheritance, she has been wise in directing her creative attention to the task of tracing the social history of the English nobility through the specious brilliancies of the Edwardian period to its hazardous position in the post-War world. Her vantage-point is unparalleled, her material has its own somewhat melancholy charm and grace, but her failure, if it can be called a failure, is one of insight and penetration. One feels frequently that an outsider could have written the social history of the English nobility with equal or greater insight, if perhaps with less sympathy. From an intellectual inheritance as brilliant as the social inheritance of Miss Sackville-West, Naomi Mitchison, despite her strong interest in contemporary radical movements, has seen fit to attempt to vitalise history rather than to interpret the chaotic present. Her controlling purpose may be said to be the humanising of history through fiction,

the demonstration that heroic personages and epochs were human after all. Mrs. Mitchison's work is not, of course, of the popular 'debunking' sort, but to her intimate knowledge of the past she brings a perhaps feminine interest in its more personal and unofficial side. Her successes have not been few, though the scholarly and conventional may feel that at times her rendition of the life of ancient Greece and Rome is disconcertingly colloquial. With such historical innovations as Mrs. Mitchison's may be contrasted the historical fiction of Carola Oman, who works in a more conventional tradition. She is less intent on modernising the past than is Mrs. Mitchison; instead, she seems bent on bringing historical fiction up to the standards of modern historical scholarship. Unwilling to rely for her effects on easily accessible romantic-historical clap-trap, she bases her novels on a careful study of the sources and of the topography of the events she narrates. But, with all her responsibility to sound fact, she does not sacrifice interest and vividness. Miss E. B. C. Jones is less experimental in subject-matter and technique than either of her close contemporaries, V. Sackville-West and Naomi Mitchison. In novels like *Quiet Interior* (1920) and the *Wedgewood Medallion* (1922), she works in what might be called the Jane Austen tradition, the delicate exploitation of the emotional and psychological relationships of persons of breeding living outwardly uneventful lives. In somewhat the same tradition are Dorothy Whipple's perceptive chronicles of British middle-class life against the shifting background of the post-war world. In *Greenbanks* (1932) and *They Knew Mr. Knight* (1934), her characters struggle sturdily towards individual salvation. Though she is perfectly aware that too high a price may be paid for security, she realises that without it dignified living is impossible.

Somewhat cynical of lasting happiness, she does not overlook the incursion of the irrational and the romantic into the somewhat conventional atmosphere of bourgeois existence. The work of Phyllis Bentley somewhat resembles that of Storm Jameson, particularly in the utilisation of their common Yorkshire background, interest in the evolution of industry, and insight into the relationship of women to the late Victorian and post-Victorian world.

The appearance of Margaret Kennedy's *The Constant Nymph* in 1924 signalised the advent in the post-War period of what might be called the *jeune-fille* novel, a novel, however, not so much for *jeunes filles* as by them and about them. *The Constant Nymph* and other novels of the type suggest that their authors have managed almost entirely to escape the nightmare memories of the War and to face life in even the post-War world with the eagerness and sensitiveness of youth. Miss Kennedy is at her best in depicting the artist in his not altogether unhumorous conflict with the philistine world, an honoured and ancient theme to which she brings such spontaneity and humour, such tenderness and pathos, that her creation has an appearance of originality. A similar freshness and a greater delicacy appear in such novels as Rosamond Lehman's *Dusty Answer* (1927) and *Invitation to the Waltz* (1932). In a way, Miss Lehman's fiction resembles Miss E. B. C. Jones's, but its tone is distinctly younger and fresher. Probably no writer of this period is Miss Lehman's equal in depicting the sensibility of the young girl in her not too easy transition from the awkward age into the adult world. Her feelings may not be profound or world-shaking, but it is Miss Lehman's distinction that she gives those psychological repercussions the intensest reality, however miniature in significance they may be from a social or philosophical point of view. Miss

Elizabeth Bowen is not to the same degree a specialist in sentiment ; her observation, sympathetic and penetrating as it may be, is touched with malice and barbed with humour. Like Miss Lehman, she is an admirable and fastidious craftsman, and such novels as *The Hotel* (1927) and *To the North* (1932) seem to promise a development that may be denied the more delicate artist. Out of a different world and in a less genteel tradition come the novels of Norah Hoult, whose recently emergent work seems to belong to the drab realistic tradition associated in English letters with the name of George Gissing. Here one is likely to find little enough of wit or grace or urbanity ; instead, those who like that sort of thing will find fidelity to grim fact and honesty in the treatment of the unhappy victims of an economic order badly out of joint.

But certainly the most brilliant woman novelist of the post-War period is Mrs. Virginia Woolf. Mrs. Woolf's major concern seems to be the creation in fiction of a sense of reality, but her conception of reality differs fundamentally from the realism of the older generation of Moore and Bennett. She is persuaded that reality, as distinct from realism, is an inward and subjective thing, that to communicate a sense of life the novelist must abandon the construction of an external world brick by brick and devote himself to the construction of character through the complexity of the contemporary consciousness. She sees consciousness, as all but the behaviouristic psychologist sees it, as a complex of bodily sensations, feelings, emotions, and ideas, and through her rendition of that complex, she attempts the creation of a sense of being alive. Perhaps no other novelist of this period, not even Dorothy Richardson who may be said to have initiated this method for the English novel, is so skilled in communicating this sense of

life being lived. For she brings to her work the most highly individualised of gifts—hypersensitiveness on the sensory side, the most refined observation of the thought and feeling processes, and a deep and tender response to the pathetic evanescence of the reality she has dedicated herself to adumbrating.

On the technical side, as well, no novelist of this time is more conspicuously gifted. Like Huxley and Joyce, she usually abandons plot as a principle of structure, but she knows that the stream of consciousness must be supplied with banks lest it inundate author and reader alike. In *Jacob's Room* (1922), the principle of unity, the personality of Jacob, seemed inadequate to bind together the disparate impressions of him seen subjectively and objectively, but in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) the same principle is used with greater effectiveness, for the personality of that not too profound but singularly charming woman is kept sufficiently steadily in the centre of the reader's interest to furnish a point of reference for the other persons of the story, even though they touch the life of Clarissa Dalloway only fleetingly. Even more daringly, in her beautiful novel, *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Mrs. Woolf uses a personality as the integrating principle of her singularly poignant picture of transient human existence. Mrs. Ramsay is seen, not merely as the singularly unself-centred centre of her own existence, but (not only in her life, but, after her physical death, in her spiritual persistence) as the focus of a concentric series of existences more or less intimately involved with hers. Added to Mrs. Woolf's constructive power is the charm of her style, a style freshly redolent, delicately poetic, and rhythmically subtle. If there is in the contemporary period any novelist whose every word any critical reader must heed, that novelist is Virginia Woolf.

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THE DIVISION OF MYNA'S SOUL.

BY C. T. STONEHAM.

It was inevitable that he should be named Henry. He was a big cock of the Rhode Island breed, his parents had been imported to Limuru in the Kenya Highlands. There Henry grew to maturity, and at two years old had found the salubrious climate so much to his taste that he weighed considerably more than his English-bred sire.

Arapmyna, a middle-aged Lumbwa, worked on the poultry farm as garden boy and he had a great respect for Henry. He had never seen a cock so big and handsome, nor so gallant and chivalrous to his wives. Myna was not married, for he was improvident and unlucky. Several times he had acquired goats and cattle sufficient to purchase a wife, but always a business venture or a gambling game had attracted him and again he had found himself without property. By now he accepted the celibate state as predestined for him, but as he watched Henry strutting with his hens he reflected how natural to the proper dignity of the male was this condition of overlordship and responsibility.

Myna would have liked as many wives as Henry. He doubted if he would be so successful with them, for he realised the difficulties of the uxorious sultan, the diplomacy and forcefulness required to keep order where it was abhorred, to banish jealousy and strife while retaining respect and affection. He narrowly observed the conduct of his model, noting the high-handed but sympathetic manner with which the cock settled domestic disputes, his shocked condemnation of feminine vindictiveness, the

hauteur of his command and the persuasiveness of his cajolery. Henry was indeed a lord to cherish and obey, a noble creature, absolute in authority, generous and benevolent at all times.

Henry's pen adjoined the vegetable garden. The bird would stand, upright and proud as a great chief, watching the gardener at work, and Myna would throw him the beetles and grubs he found in the soil. Then what a joyous excited clucking summoned the moody hens to the feast, while their lord broke up the offering, extolling its rarity, praising its succulence, until the most blasé bird envisaged an unparalleled treat and flew to receive the bounty. It was true that every so often the morsel would find its way into Henry's own crop, but with such dignified aplomb, such attentive volubility, was this refreshment enjoyed that his bemused following seemed more satisfied than if their own gullets had been tickled. This lordly subterfuge was to Myna the quintessence of sophistication. How vastly superior to the vulgar behaviour of man, who had no skill to disguise his appetites nor make graceful their fulfilment !

Myna gradually came to understand that in some way Henry was connected with his destiny. In an environment where the mysteries are everywhere apparent, and no fashionable philosophy attempts their explanation, it is easy to accept the hypothesis that life is a pattern already woven, and that its threads, at first divergent, may later entwine to carry on a scheme or knot its termination. A fowl and a man may therefore be of close importance in a mutual adventure, the one influencing the other, the two lives interwoven for a period, or perhaps for ever.

Myna felt the existence of an intangible bond between himself and Henry. He addressed him as brother. The bird's fierce bright eye expressed wisdom and knowledge,

intuitive and unconsidered, but deriving from the supernatural. He realised all that was Myna, saw through the sullen outer husk to the lonely, bewildered soul of him.

The first evidence of this prescience was when Henry stood by the netting one day and, after crowing loudly to attract Myna's attention, stared solemnly at him and uttered several long, mournful croaks. Myna could not help being impressed by the bird's grave demeanour. He felt sure this pronouncement presaged evil. That afternoon a messenger arrived from the Reserve to say his old father was dead. It meant nothing but grief for Myna, for he had three elder brothers who would succeed to the small property. The most he could hope for was a calf, and this in fact was all he got, and it was a bull calf at that.

Another day Henry suddenly cried out with a shrill note of warning. A moment later Myna cut himself badly with the *panga* he was using. Here was indisputable evidence of the foresight of the fowl.

From then Myna directed his affairs on the advice of the cock. Each morning he would consult the bird, understanding from his deportment, grave or gay, the nature of the events that would befall him. He consulted his oracle and was justified in his faith, as in the matter of the Swahili headman who publicly insulted his subordinate. Upon enquiry Henry had assumed a warlike attitude, crowing with martial vigour. Myna took his spears and went to the headman's hut. He had small difficulty in forcing from the man an unconditional and abject apology. But evidently the Swahili complained to his employer, for shortly afterwards Myna was dismissed.

A young Englishman named Rice was staying at the farm; he had every sympathy with the truculent Lumbwa who refused to submit to browbeating.

‘I am going on a shooting *safari*,’ he told Myna. ‘Men of your tribe have a reputation for courage; how would you like to be my gun-bearer?’

This was a great honour and a lucrative position, but Myna was troubled. How could he go off and leave his familiar, almost his second self? He had made up his mind to steal Henry and carry him off to the Reserve.

‘Bwana, I will come with you, but I want baksheesh.’

Rice regarded the sullen face of the native with suspicion. He approved the fearless, independent breed, but detested its cupidity.

‘There is a red cock,’ explained Myna. ‘He means a great deal to me. I will pay for him out of the wages you will give me.’

Rice laughed good-naturedly. That evening he bought Henry from the farmer and handed him over to his new man. The bird spent the night tied by the leg in Myna’s hut.

The *safari* was to start the following afternoon; Myna went down to the native village and purchased two hens. They were small hens of the nondescript Kikuyu breed and he felt ashamed to offer them to the Sultan, but Henry did not seem critical: he introduced himself with much rodomontade and took charge of his new wives with benevolent masterfulness.

There was a witch-doctor on the farm, and Myna went to consult him about the chances of his journey. The old man was clever, not without a propensity for joking; he made it his business to know everything possible about prospective clients and the Lumbwa’s fondness for the fowl had reached his ears. Having pouched his fee, he threw his bones, and told Myna with impressive gravity that his spirit dwelt in two bodies.

'It is a marriage of souls, my friend : what is good will be shared, and what is evil will be felt equally by both. Joy is divided, harm is divided, death for one will be also for two.'

This mystery had been heard of ; though rare it was not incredible. Blood-brothers encouraged it ; between man and beast it was held possible.

'Who is the other ?' asked Myna.

'He stands upon two feet like a man. He has many wives. His voice is loud in the morning.'

Myna nodded comprehendingly. His own conclusions were verified. 'Unless he gives back half my soul I have not many years to live,' he muttered.

The *m'ganga* agreed. 'But all is with fate,' he consoled.

Rice's lorry left that afternoon bound for the Loita. In it rode the new gun-boy, his hand resting upon a box faced with wire mesh, in which Henry and his two wives found cramped quarters. The cock was scandalised by the proceedings, of every action about him he declared his suspicion and dislike in resonant, outraged tones. Between whiles he comforted his hens in musical asides. They, being seasoned travellers, displayed the utmost indifference.

The first camp on the Euasso Nyiro was reached at sundown. When tents had been pitched and the cook-fire lighted, Myna liberated his fowls. Henry came out of the box at a quick walk, announcing importantly the obvious fact of freedom. The hens followed and at once set about the business of scratching and foraging. Several times they had travelled, slung head-downwards from a pole : camps were not strange to them.

Myna got some maize and scattered it. Henry rejoiced.

The glade was surrounded by bushes, at one side the river ran gurgling. Henry had never drunk at a running stream

before, but the hens did so without scruple and he copied their example. Then the fowls were caught and returned to their box ; Myna was taking no chances of losing his soul in the belly of leopard or mamba.

The next morning Rice, accompanied by his gun-boy, proceeded on foot in the hope of surprising lions. The lorry was to be loaded and brought to a rendezvous twenty miles on. Myna, with dubiety, entrusted his pets to the cook, who promised to take good care of them.

But the cook, a Baganda, was contemptuous of a Lumbwa's affairs ; the crate was neglected till the last moment, and then stuck precariously on the back of the truck. The first bump shook it off, nor did anyone remark its absence until the new camp was reached and Myna demanded his birds. Then was seen the scandalous spectacle of a Christian Baganda clinging to his master's knees while an enraged Lumbwa jabbed at his shrinking body with a spear. Rice had to avert murder by planting a bony fist on the angle of Myna's jaw.

When the boy recovered he went and sat down under a tree, nursing his spear and brooding. By evening he had vanished ; he was not seen again on that *safari*.

The box had fallen while the lorry was climbing a steep hill from the river-valley. It fell on one corner and rolled down some distance before coming to rest in a bush. The inmates were shaken but unharmed.

Petrol cases are not tightly nailed, a board had sprung, the fowls were able to squeeze out of their prison. Henry found himself at liberty in the wilderness.

Having walked round his bewildered hens several times expressing his disgust at the whole episode, he started off downhill to the river, his wives in attendance. Henry found the camp-site and was satisfied ; the wealth of grubs and

insects in the grass soon distracted his attention from everything but the employment of beak and claw.

Throughout the afternoon the interlopers fed, or lazed, in the clearing and no creature came near them. But at evening the bush became full of circumspect grey forms who moved unhurriedly through the grass keeping up a continuous low cheeping. A flock of guineafowl were coming down to the river for their evening drink.

Henry sounded his alarm and stood staring. The guineafowl took no notice of the strangers, but one old cock jumped up on a boulder and gave his harsh war-cry, like the call of a pheasant. Henry replied to the challenge with alacrity; he crowed until the glade re-echoed, and every fowl was startlingly apprised of his magnificent presence. Then with quick haughty steps he hastened to give battle.

The kanga was not backward: if this red stranger wanted to fight he should be accommodated; he sprang from his perch and threw himself on guard, erecting all his neck feathers, looking, with the horn on his nose, fierce as a miniature rhinoceros. The hens of both species peered dubiously at this meeting of Greeks.

The protagonists circled each other, jumped and met in the air, slashing with claws and beaks. Feathers flew, in determined silence the warriors fenced, feinted, and delivered their damaging assaults.

At the height of combat a diversion occurred which nearly cost both Henry and the kanga their lives; a slender spotted creature charged out from a gully into the midst of the flock, turning and twisting with incredible agility, striking at the fluttering birds. A serval had been stalking the guineafowl for the last ten minutes; he chose this moment to make his attack.

Henry was swept away from his antagonist by a spate of

fleeing hens. He wheeled to confront what he supposed was a large domestic cat, such as had often peered at him through the netting of his run. Henry had small respect for the animal, familiarity and immunity had bred in him contempt.

The serval seized a fat guineafowl hen, its flailing wings beat at his head, temporarily blinding him. While in this predicament he was attacked by a large red bird unknown in his experience, who struck with beak and spurs at his eyes. Through the blinding feathers he swiped with vicious paw again and again at the assailant, but could neither register a hit nor defend himself from the vigorous onslaughts. It was infuriating and disturbing. He put down his prey and pinned it with his paw, the better to cope with Henry's attempts. And at that instant Henry, having a clear target, leapt at it and struck downwards with feet and wings. Instinctively the serval flinched and flattened; the guineafowl escaped and ran sqwarking to cover, more frightened than hurt.

Henry turned, light-footed, to engage again, but stared aghast at the snarling demon rushing upon him. He had a conviction that here discretion was the sensible policy. He ran gawkily, aiding his flight with outstretched wings, bawling in horror from trumpet-like neck. He had raised the devil, and his wild, rolling eye proclaimed how helpless he felt to cope with the distressing situation.

The serval did not pursue him far; he stood in the midst of the glade swearing and scolding, accepting this rub of fate with the philosophy of the wild hunter.

Henry, relieved of imminent terror, dropped into a fast walk. His hens joined him; he led the way among the bushes explaining fussily his reasons for terminating a contest which could have no profit. Anxiety no longer pressed;

he paused to crow, as arrogantly as though he trod his own midden and no enemy could cause his hasty, undignified departure.

Away along the river the disconsolate Lumbwa heard faintly the voice of his 'soul' and hurried in its direction. Henry yet lived and proclaimed his vitality: should he have to hunt all night among the thickets Myna would find him.

The red cock stood upon an anthill in a little glade surrounded by the vast untenanted bush of Africa. Had he been capable of realising the immensity of that terrain and the numberless dangers it held, Henry would have died of sheer fright. But ignorance produced in him the usual self-satisfaction; he was lord of his petty demesne, no rival affronted him, his creatures were subservient, worshipping. He crowed disdainful challenge to the gathering night and its familiars, swallowing a few juicy termites to lubricate his raucous voice.

At dusk he began to be bothered. There was no house, no safe walls behind which to shelter. The hens instructed him, flying up from branch to branch of a gigantic baobab tree until they reached a bare perch twenty feet above ground. There, incongruously, the three fowls sat in a row, bringing an appearance of the farmyard into this place where survival depended upon unobtrusiveness, cunning, and constant fear.

The night rushed down out of the East, rounding up kopje and plain, drawing all closer in the huddle of shadows. The diverse landscape faded from sight and became a glade fenced with blackness. Henry peered with craning head downwards at a vague world where strange creatures moved rustling and squeaking, ichneumon, and meerkat, and genet.

With slow regal tread a lion passed under the tree on

his way to water, grunting morosely for warning and the chance of gossip. The moon rose, a lesser sun, imitative in brilliance but lacking the vital heat. Through the glade a great horned owl flapped ponderously, his eyes directed at the ground where striped rodents played and scuttled, so that he did not notice the three strangers.

Then a hyena appeared, walking like a lackey who fears his master's kick. He preceded a small she-leopard, hunting in silence, picking a graceful way among burrs and briars, pausing at every tree to sniff and rub.

Under the baobab the hyena stopped, raised his head and inhaled deeply. The smell reminded him of native villages ; he was puzzled. But not for long ; he manoeuvred to bring the boughs into line with the moon, and saw three familiar shapes outlined. His mouth watered for them : stupid, easy prey, but at present beyond his reach.

From the shadows the leopard marked the hyena's interest. She advanced to the spot, driving him to reluctant retreat, and gazed up in turn. Plain on the bare branch sat three plump birds ; there was no reason why she should not catch all of them. She went to the trunk, sprang high against it, and began to climb.

Instantly Henry was aware of her. His head craned this way and that, the sound of claws on bark was distinctly audible, horror possessed him. It might be the ferocious cat, with whom he had fought, on his trail, burning to avenge its injuries. The hens took refuge in immobility, in the darkness they lacked all confidence, they would not stir until the climber pounced upon them.

The leopard was crawling out along the branch, testing each foothold, hoping that her weight would not be too great for the diminishing support. Henry saw green eyes reflecting the moonlight, staring at him hungrily. For a

moment he was paralysed with fright, then uttering fearful yells he precipitated himself into the dark void, flapping wildly. The hens followed his lead; the sqwarking of the fugitives resounded through the bush.

Myna, moving cautiously along a game trail, was shocked by that uproar. His soul was in jeopardy, he ran fast to the rescue.

At the edge of the glade he encountered the three adventurers flying before a galloping hyena. At sight of man the pursuer abandoned all claims to the quarry, swerved, and sped away into the thickets. The leopard, close behind, was not so easily discouraged; she crouched, snarling wickedly, hoping that the man would beware of her.

Myna shouted, reviling the enemy. He was loath to fight her in such circumstances, but had no choice, for if she caught his soul he would indubitably perish. He leapt forward, swung his spear, and menaced the angry cat.

She was intimidated, giving ground quickly, but keeping her watchful gaze on him. Myna did not strike; he knew that an unwounded leopard might be bluffed, a wounded one never.

'Be off, daughter of devils!' he yelled. 'I am a great warrior; I will kill you!'

The leopard flinched from this malevolence. A sudden doubt assailed her—man was an incalculable foe. There was other prey in the *nyika*, why risk so much for this? With a last defiant snarl she turned, and in two bounds vanished.

Myna lost not an instant in chasing Henry. Round the bushes he followed the shrieking cock, until exhaustion brought Henry to the futile concealment of a grass-clump. There he was captured. Safely tucked under Myna's arm, he protruded his long neck, screaming dolefully as he was carried away towards the river.

'Fear not, my soul,' Myna comforted him. 'We are together again, and henceforth no hand but mine shall guard you.'

A week later a stock-farmer on the Mau was confronted by a lean, serious Lumbwa who begged work as a herdsman. Under the boy's arm reposed a large red cock, voicing his suspicion of the stranger with a loud 'Kwar-k !'

The farmer liked men of this race ; he engaged him.

'What will you do with your fine fowl ?' he asked. 'Eat it ?'

Myna shuddered. 'Never !' he answered. 'He is as myself. Together we have faced devils in the night, journeyed far, hunted our food. He is better than any watchdog ; he will help me mind the cattle.'

He dropped Henry to the ground, saluted with his spear, and walked off towards the huts. To the farmer's astonishment, the cock walked after the man, clucking loquaciously as though discussing the new situation with him.

THE WIZARD OF MAURITIUS.

BY CAPPY RICKS.

MEN there have been since the dawn of history who have possessed powers beyond those of their fellows in such a degree as to justify in description the use of those very much overworked words—supernatural, superhuman.

Two such have lived in our time—Sandow the strong man, whose powers were never entirely demonstrated in public, and Houdini, called, for want of a better name, an illusionist, who could make his way through concrete walls, as at Walton Gaol—but even their extraordinary and inexplicable powers were eclipsed by the weird qualities possessed by the ‘Wizard of Mauritius’ and exercised by him over the period 1761–84.

It was in the former year that Henri Bottineau, a petty officer in the French Navy, claimed to be able to see ships at sea, and sometimes land, that were invisible to others, and he so impressed his Captain that in the following year the petty officer was taken from the active list and attached to the Bureau de Marine.

What happened there and then we do not know, but in 1764 Bottineau was appointed Second Harbour Warden at the Isle of France, a post he continued to hold for the next twenty years. During this time he proved that he was able to detect the presence of ships, and to say that they were bound to the Island, while yet they were two to three hundred miles distant ; the elapsed time between ‘prophecy’ and arrival being often as much as four days.

Over a period of fourteen years there were 575 arrivals

at the Island, and Bottineau had 'predicted' every one without exception. A further report, dated May 26, 1782, from the Vicomte de Souillac to the Minister of Marine stated that the same was done over a period of seventeen years, with 100 per cent. result. If ships were in convoy he could give the number of them and their formation. On one occasion, while France and Britain were at war, he occasioned considerable alarm in the Island, which was then in a precarious state, by reporting that a fleet of eleven ships were converging upon it, though two days after the warning he stated that the indications had undergone a change, though he could not say what such portended ; but the fleet never eventuated.

This operated to his discredit, and aroused a feeling of resentment against him, easily imaginable in the circumstances, but such did not obtain for long, for a ship arriving from Pondicherry reported having passed a fleet of eleven ships on the Cape to India route, which passes close to the Isle of France ; the ' prophet ' was vindicated.

The powers of this remarkable person were reported, doubtless in 1779, to the Marquis de Castries, then Minister of Marine, and the Governor of the Island received instructions to keep a record of all the so-called ' wizard's ' announcements and check carefully the results, which he was to embody in a report to the Ministry.

The upshot of the matter was that Bottineau received an offer from the Vicomte de Souillac of £10,000 and a pension of £100 per month for his secret, and the explanation and demonstration of his method, providing, of course, that it proved to be what was claimed for it, and that it was generally applicable in the service of the nation.

Bottineau, who appears to have been an altogether impossible person with exaggerated ideas of his own impor-

tance, brusquely declined the offer, declaring that his secret was worth twenty times the amount offered.

Bottineau could not himself explain his powers, though he announced his ability to make others proficient in the working of his method, but he went so far as to say that the matter was one of atmospheric vibrations combined with released sea-gases caused by the progress of a ship through the water (which may not be so fantastic as would at first sight appear), which produced faint but unmistakable indications in the upper air immediately above the scene of disturbance.

In the event Bottineau was recalled to France, and he left Mauritius in the early months of 1784, bearing with him statements as to the full efficacy of his powers signed by the Governor of the Colony, the Attorney-General, the senior naval officer of the station (countersigned by the great La Perouse as Assistant S.N.O.), and all the military officers then serving in the Island.

On his passage to France in the frigate *Dufour* he twice advised the Captain of the proximity of unseen land, once when the distance was stated by him to be thirty miles and once when it was 150 from the position of the ship.

This did not 'tally' with the position assigned the ship, but events proved that Bottineau's statements were accurate to 'within a league.'

Upon arrival in France Bottineau received but a cool reception, being generally condemned, in official circles at least, as a charlatan, although he succeeded in eliciting the warm support of Marat, the leader of the revolution. This, though, came to nothing; the stirring times did not permit of Bottineau receiving the attention and consideration that indubitably would seem to have been his due, and, disgusted, he offered his secret to Britain, for £52,000 and a pension.

The offer was declined, and shortly afterwards Bottineau died, an embittered and disappointed man.

Thirty years after his death his method received consideration by both France and Britain, but, somewhat naturally, the man had taken his secret with him, and nothing transpired. Captain the Hon. Francis Maude, R.N., then in command of the East India Squadron, was entrusted with enquiries and, although his report seems to have been lost, a letter of his, reproduced in the *Nautical Magazine* in 1834, alluded to Bottineau's art as Nauscopia, and stated that it was then 'of general interest and the application well understood,' though what one may take from this is, to say the least, vague.

When Captain Becher, R.N., founded the magazine mentioned, in 1834, the first item of professional interest dealt with was Bottineau and his lost art, and the matter occupied the chief place in this magazine's pages for some time.

Years afterwards Sir David Brewster the scientist, who had investigated the matter over a long period, wrote in his book, *Natural Magic*: 'The Wizard beacon-keeper of the Isle of France who could see in the air vessels bound to the Island long indeed before they appeared above the horizon must have derived his powers from diligent observations of the phenomenæ of nature'; but this leaves us still 'in the air' and with no recourse but to believe that the powers of the 'Wizard beacon-keeper' were indubitably supernatural; nothing else meets the case.

The case of Bottineau has not been completely unique; an almost similar one was known to exist in the West Indies forty to thirty-five years ago, and the 'Wizard' in this case was an old negro wharfinger, called by the English

captains Uncle Ned because 'he had no wool on the top of the head in the place where the wool ought to grow,' at the Isle of Grande Turk, more commonly known as Turk's Island. This was the port of call for the Newfoundland and Canadian salt-fish fleet, mostly schooners and barquentines, returning in ballast after discharging their cargoes in the Latin countries of South and Central America.

Ned could tell his master, the principal salt merchant of the island, of the arrival of any ship that was coming 'in to him' always a day in advance, and never once was he wrong over a period of some five years; he 'predicted' every arrival, some thirty per year. Strangely enough, he could not predict other arrivals, and in this lay the difference between his inexplicable art and Bottineau's.

On one occasion Ned's master had loaded the barquentine *Culzean Castle* of Banff, and this ship sailed for Newfoundland to the tune of a strong 'Trade' early one morning. In the afternoon of the same day, when the ship had dropped below the horizon for six hours or so, Ned burst in upon his master's siesta with the news—'Dat ship be a-coming back, sir.'—'Oh, what ship, Ned?'—'Why, the *Culzean Castle*, of course.'—'All right, call me when she gets back'; and the salt merchant resumed his interrupted siesta, knowing that he would not see the *Castle* again until her next voyage at least. The ship arrived some twenty hours later, having had a long-and-short-leg 'beat' back; a seaman had fallen from aloft and been seriously injured.

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The writer was reminded of these weird experiences by one of which he was an interested witness some ten years ago, and which he ventures to give by way of suggesting a probable solution. Timber-logging in Borneo, he had gone into a river in search of a Mandore who controlled a

certain amount of labour, to find his man not at home. The river calls for some slight description. At its entrance the right bank was marked by a cliffy hill some 200 feet in height ; diagonally across the river there lay a somewhat similar hill almost as high, and again there was a rise on the right bank a half a mile in. On this rise there stood the Imam's house built on 20-feet stilts ; at the top of the steps, and hanging from the lintel of the doorway, was a child's Eolian harp constructed of young bamboos the thickness of a lead pencil, each of different length and all with a slit cut for their purpose.

The writer talked with the Imam and the others present for an hour, and then rose to go ; standing up, his head came within a few inches of the harp which, although there was not a breath of air moving, emitted a low almost indistinguishable note. Slight though this was, the Imam heard it and spoke one word—' Ajack,' and this was the name of the Mandore.

' What makes you say that ? ' he was asked. ' Well, a " sapit " with a lot of men in it is just entering the river, and as Ajack is the only man out with such a boat, it must be he returning.' Further questioned, he said that the air shook against the side of the first hill when a boat entered in a calm, and that the air-waves bumped against the second hill and then were transmitted to the eminence on which stood his house ; it was all perfectly clear to him, but it left, and still leaves, his interlocutor staggered and quite ' out of his depth.'

To cull further from personal experience, the writer may mention that, over a period of nearly thirty years spent navigating in the tropics, he has often been impressed, staggered is again the term, by the phenomenal night-time sight possessed by certain native prowlers of the sea, particu-

larly those of the Marshall and Caroline Islands in the North Pacific and of the seamen of Rotumah in the South (finest native seamen in the world) ; the Torres Strait Islanders and the Orang Laut (men of the sea) of the Malay Archipelago. In the darkness these men, whose day-time sight was much inferior to the writer's, have announced the presence of land, even to the describing of previously unknown features of it, in a manner so startling as to give rise to very serious consideration as to whether, or not, these men really *see* the land as we do, at night, or are assisted by a sense not possessed by the European. What is the answer ?

Mauritius.

VEILS.

*Veils of the first spring green on leafless trees,
The patient trees that waited long for spring.
Veils that the twilight and the darkness fling ;
Veils of oblivion, sleep, those mysteries
That fold around our senses ; each of these
Dim veils is wonderful, a mystic thing.
And ' Veiled in flesh the Godhead see ' we sing.
Behind all veils, God lives, and loves, and sees.*

*Our souls are veiled, even from those we love.
Our eyes are veiled, so that there passes by
A vision or a glory, all too late.
God lifts the veil, but hangs it just above
Our utmost reach, when, gazing wrapt, we try
To glimpse the vision of an Opening Gate.*

C. M. MALLET.

*TIDE OF VALOUR.**A FAROE ISLAND STORY.*

BY D. WILSON MACARTHUR.

ONLY the bitterness of angry jealousy drove him to walk so far, to go on blindly far beyond where the footpath ended on the beach.

The sea, dark and hostile, hurled itself in long breakers into the bay, between the high cliffs that locked it, and, shattered into spray, surged up the steep sloping sand, with a scrunching mutter of innumerable tiny fragments of shell, innumerable tiny pebbles rolling over each other.

The sea flung long tentacles into the bay to reach him, to seize him and drag him away out to where it could work its will upon him.

He was unconscious of it.

He was barely conscious of the wind, which tore in from the grey desolation of the Atlantic, which buffeted him and made his progress a staggering zigzag over the sand. A powder of sand whistled over the beach, driven by the wind, and sometimes stung his hands, even was swept high enough occasionally to sting his cheek.

He trudged on, his feet sinking to the ankles, the cuffs of his smart Danish trousers heavy with sand, his smart Danish shoes sagging with the weight of sand in them, hurting his feet.

He thought only of Kirstin and Aksel, and how they had laughed at him.

His brain seethed.

‘Don’t be scared, Haldor,’ Aksel had cried jestingly. ‘It’s quite safe!’

And Kirstin had laughed, her eyes sparkling. She loved danger. Nothing frightened her, nothing awed her.

But he had drawn back. He had refused to go on, feeling a weakness in his knees, feeling a chill in the small of his back, and in his brain feeling a vertigo that made him, standing as he was safely upon a broad shelf of rock, shut his eyes tightly in case he should fall.

They had laughed.

To them it was so simple. Only a short climb along a face of rock, to reach the point where, so Aksel declared, one could look across and see the Troll’s Finger, a long slender spur of rock, waving and beckoning. A foolish child’s tale, of course; but they believed it. They were like that, Kirstin and Aksel—children, believing anything. A trick of light at early dusk, and of moisture in the air, made the distant Finger seem indeed to beckon; but a sight of the illusion was not worth the terror of that climb.

Haldor had remained behind.

They had tackled the climb gaily. For them it held no terrors. Used since childhood to the mighty resounding sea cliffs, sheer rock-faces a thousand, two thousand feet high, where the seabirds nested and flocked in congregations of tens of thousands, they could see no danger in this scramble along a two-inch ledge ten feet above the boiling sea. Aksel could do it, casually, with one hand in his pocket, his cigarette nonchalantly between his lips.

Kirstin could do it, in spite of the skirt that whipped around her knees, with a free hand to keep her hat from being blown away.

Haldor could not attempt it.

Always, from his earliest recollection, it had been the same.

He could never do what others did. Blind fear swept him, stealing away his strength, paralysing his limbs, emptying his brain, at the mere approach of risk. His childhood had been agony. Among playmates to whom hazard was the spice of life, to whom, when they grew up, danger would be an everyday companion—walking hand in hand with them, accepted as inevitable, on the fowling cliffs, on the far cod banks of the turbulent North Atlantic—his weakness was paramount.

Haldor is afraid !

How often he had heard it ! How often it had goaded him almost to the point of desperation—and how often he had stopped short of the desperation that would drive him to reckless daring !

It had been a dispensation of providence that his father was a cripple, only a shopkeeper, and not a farmer, or a fowler, or a fisherman. He could follow in his father's footsteps without handicap from his weakness.

At first, however, it had seemed that he would do far better than that, and find a salve for the laceration of his pride that knowledge of his cowardice inflicted. His father prospered. He began dealing in fish—buying boatloads of ~~cod~~ from the inshore fishermen, hiring women to clean and scrape and split and scrub them, and stack them in great heaps on the rocks, thickly salted, to await export.

So the Dahls had looked to Haldor to become something more than a village shopkeeper, or even an exporter of dried cod. He had done well at the High School in Torshavn, he had been sent to Copenhagen, to the University ; and he had been happy.

The life suited him. The city fascinated him. Here he was safe from the primitive, from elemental dangers. Life became richer, fuller, something remote from the simple

existence of the islands. He was one of a young, gay, eager crowd, and yet he was not engulfed ; he remained an individual, and something of a figure. He was clever, sharp in his own advantage ; and quick wits made for popularity more even than excellence in sport, so that no one reproached him for his neglect of athletic life.

And then his father died, quite suddenly. Ernst Dahl had suffered all his adult life from the accident that had crippled him—an accident at sea, in a tiny smack on the distant Greenland Banks—yet his death was unexpected. They were not prepared for it. Haldor's mother could not carry on alone ; and unless the business continued to prosper the money for Haldor's education could not be forthcoming.

So Haldor had returned, resentful and embittered.

He had a quick brain, he was sharp and clever ; it was not difficult for him to take charge, to master the details of the business, to keep it running smoothly. But he fretted to escape again from the narrow primitive Faroe life.

His dreams were gone. It seemed that he would never live in Denmark now, that he was condemned to remain here all his life. It was a while before he swallowed his angry sense of frustration and tried to make the best of a hateful situation.

He had one staunch friend—Aksel Bærensten. Aksel was his champion, tall and strong and fearless, taking life as it came, ready for any emergency. And Kirstin Gregerssen—always Kirstin had made the trio, a bit of a tomboy, accepting any challenge and yet queerly, stubbornly fond of the coward, Haldor.

Perhaps they were sorry for him, pitied his weakness and felt a sense of exaltation in championing him. Perhaps they admired him because he was quick and clever, because

his tongue was sharp and he was useful when difficulties had to be overcome by brains alone. Perhaps they feared him, because of his cunning.

At any rate, they had accepted him. And Haldor had welcomed their friendship, and appeared to give his, unstintedly. If he held himself in reserve, if at heart he was cold, and full of distrust, and really indifferent to them, they never guessed it. He was too clever for that.

So, when he had mastered the business that had brought him back from Copenhagen, and had overcome his bitterness, he sought out his two old friends.

He found Aksel unchanged—unless perhaps taller, stronger, a man now, every inch a man, full of quick laughter, and daring, and the zest of life.

He found Kirstin subtly changed.

She had always been pretty, in her boyish way. She was lovely now.

He went home and dreamed of her, and in the morning he knew what life held for him.

He would marry Kirstin. He was well off, he would be richer soon, he could offer her everything of the best. And he loved her. He wanted her, for her loveliness, her spirit, the comfort she would bring him, easing the hurt in him.

He never doubted. But when he strove to show her that his feeling was no longer the old easy friendship, she became elusive, confused and nervous, and often she was silent, and a little unhappy, when she was with him. She seemed, too, at times to wish to avoid his company, and was reluctant to be alone with him.

It angered him. He grew impatient, and so discovered the stumbling-block. Aksel, of course ! Fool that he had been, to remain blind to that ! Aksel loved her too. And she ? He could not be sure. But his conceit was shaken.

And then had come that trivial incident on the shore ; and, left alone on the safe rock, he had recovered his grip, had crept cautiously as far as he dared—and had overheard.

They were half-way along the narrow ledge, out of sight of his former position. They had stopped, by mutual consent, to rest, not at all disturbed by the precariousness of their footing—standing there with their backs against the rock, as if on solid ground, looking out to sea.

‘It’s a pity—about Haldor,’ Aksel said.

‘Yes. He can’t help it. It’s not his fault. And he’s clever, he’s really——’

‘I know. It’s bad luck. I thought he’d have got over it. He wants a big jolt some time—to be up against real danger, and have to go on, and then he wouldn’t be a coward any more. I’m fond of him.’

‘So am I,’ Kirstin said. ‘But . . .’

‘Bravery’s just a matter of how you’re made,’ Aksel went on, ruminating. He did not know he was being generous, or that his generosity would kindle savage resentment.

‘All the same,’ Kirstin replied, her tone equally thoughtful, ‘every woman expects her man to be brave. She takes it for granted that he is. That’s why——’

‘Poor old Haldor ! He’ll take it badly, my dear.’

‘Yes.’

Then they knew—they knew what it would mean to him. And they laughed. He heard their laughter as they went on along the narrow ledge.

And now he was walking—walking frantically, as if to escape from that knowledge, that blinding aggregation of knowledge. He was a coward. He would never be anything else. Nothing else counted. Kirstin would not marry him, because he was a coward.

He found himself now on rock—a broad flat shelf at the foot of the cliffs. He scrambled over it, irritated at the interruption of his steady movement. He did not notice that he was reaching a tiny cove he had never seen before, that the shelf of rock was uncovered only because it was low tide, that already the flood was beginning to make.

Another narrow verge of sand, then a blank wall of cliff, a headland jutting out on the northern side of the cove. It fetched him up abruptly when he raised his head and saw that he could go no farther.

He half-turned, facing the sea, then walked back a little distance and swung round towards the cliffs.

They towered sheer and precipitous, seamed with lateral creases that were tiny ledges where the seabirds nested, where the fowlers found their footholds when they netted the birds. The cliffs were streaked heavily with guano. Nothing grew, except here and there a little patch of heather, or a bunch of coarse short grass. Quite low, less than thirty feet above the shore, guillemots squatted in battalions upon the ledges.

The foot of the cliff was boulder-strewn, jagged. The sea had eaten caverns into it, and the rock-face bore the marks of water, smoothed by countless tides, by the battering of countless Atlantic rollers. The sand was soft, powdery, and dotted with stones. Here and there bare rock showed through, and beyond the headland he had passed to reach the cove the sea itself was strewn with rock—gigantic slender needles of rock that reared upwards, eaten round the base, tapering delicately to sharp pointing fingers. Seabirds wheeled about them, incessantly calling, and incessantly the sea beat upon them, swirled round them, thundering into their caverns, sending up cascades of foam and spray.

Haldor sat down on a smooth boulder. The mere strain of staring upwards at the skyline of the cliffs made him giddy and weak.

He started up suddenly.

The sea had advanced upon him. It hurled itself against the cliffs on either hand, boiling and tempestuous, and the wind, rising, moaned and whipped the spindrift off the waves. Where he stood, the sand seemed shrinking visibly, the froth of the sea almost reached his feet.

He started to run towards the southern point, where the slab of rock had given him access to the cove from Gusvik. He fetched up abruptly, realising that the slab had gone. Several feet of water swirled over it, and snatched at the foot he thrust out, almost sucking him down.

He stood for a moment, breathing quickly with distended nostrils, clenching his fists. A chill assailed him, creeping over his chest and down his spine and up into his brain. Panic began to hammer at his brain. He looked round wildly, stared out to sea—an empty sea ; stared up the cliffs—empty cliffs. He ran, staggering a little, over the narrowing strip of sand towards the northern point, was driven back from there by sheer rock-faces, unscalable and harsh.

He shouted, cupping his hands. His voice was whipped away, hurled against the cliff-foot, lost. Panic grew ; it broke down his defences and stormed his brain, it took possession of him. He rushed at the cliffs, began scrabbling for handholds, trying to ascend.

He climbed a few feet, fell back, assailed by vertigo at once. He tried again, tried point after point, failed. Desperate, he rushed back to the shelf of rock, began to wade out. But the sea, swirling up and receding, leaving two feet of green water over the shelf, tore at him greedily, and he was only saved from losing his balance, by floundering in the water

and flinging out despairing hands to clutch at fissures in the rock.

He reached the sand again, his wet clothes clinging to him, his lips salt, his eyes stinging, his fingers bruised and bleeding. The knees of his trousers were torn, and the skin beneath was blue. He dragged himself to his feet, with the froth of broken water upon his shoes, and staggered towards the cliff-face again.

He threw himself upon it, sobbing, screaming in hoarse short gasps. But every time it hurled him down again—down now into the advancing waves that would soon dash themselves in fury against the impregnable rock.

He remembered, at last, that he could swim.

He waded into the water, and flung himself wildly against the waves.

He was blind with terror. He did not know where he was going, he had no conscious intention, simply the panic urge for action, for escape from the circling cliffs. So he swam, not round the southern point towards the safety of Gusvik, the great wide bay, but away from that, round the other headland to where only a series of tiny coves and booming thunderous caverns offered momentary sanctuary and certain death.

He had not swum for more than a few minutes, fighting desperately to get out beyond the rocks, when he became aware that he was in the grip of a swift current. He did not struggle against it, realising the futility of struggle. It swept him out, and round the point, and carried him, bruised and chilled and floundering desperately to breathe, along the coast until it flung him with savage force upon the shore—a rocky shore with a narrow sand verge at a break in the cliffs.

He found his feet. He stumbled a few yards up from

the water, and automatically began to climb, still driven by his panic.

The climb was easy. Here, a different formation of rock was worn into broad shelves that formed stepping-stones, a gigantic stairway leading up to where a steep green valley cut into the cliffs, ending in a precipitous drop. At one point he was actually looking down into the cove that had so nearly been his grave.

When he was in safety, he lay for a long time, dazed and weak and sobbing, before his senses and his strength returned and his brain became alive.

He realised that he had been saved only by a miracle.

That staircase of rock showed no trace of human use. It was unknown, because useless. The seabirds never nested in such places, but only on the sheer cliff-ledges. Probably he alone was aware of it. And only a miracle had borne him to it.

He saw that in his blind panic he had swum in the opposite direction to that which common sense would have prompted. He saw, too, that a local current, swirling round the bases of the rock pinnacles, had carried him to safety—a current of which he alone, doubtless, was aware.

He said nothing when he got home. He had fallen into the water, that was all. He was all right. But a plan was forming already in his brain.

They had called him a coward. Very well; he would show them their mistake.

He waited for a while, perfecting his plan, before he put it into operation. He had not forgotten the guillemots he had noticed on the cliff.

He mentioned them to Aksel. Here was a golden opportunity. The fulmars were driving the guillemots from the higher cliffs, and the fowlers generally went after them by

boat, making a hazardous landing and scrambling up the sheer rock-faces with their poles and nets. Here was an easier way, with a safe approach to the start of the climb.

Aksel was interested. Haldor had made a discovery ! No doubt the guillemots had found a sanctuary safe from the fulmars, and were multiplying. It was indeed a wonderful chance ; and Aksel could get permission from the farmer who owned the cliffs. They could pay half their catch in return.

‘ You say we can land on the beach ? ’ he asked eagerly.

‘ Yes. If we go on the flood tide it will be easy.’

‘ Let’s go ! ’

They arranged a day, and went ; and of course Kirstin went with them. Not to climb cliffs and net seabirds, but to watch them from below. Haldor said nothing about the approach by land from Gusvik at low tide. That did not enter into his plan.

When they landed in the cove, driving the boat’s prow up on to the sand near the northern point, they carried the fowling gear and their picnic hamper up to the foot of the cliff, and Haldor returned to make the boat fast. A boulder hid it and him from the others, and, holding the painter, he put his foot on the prow and thrust with all his strength.

The slim boat shot out against the tide, and he let the painter slip through his fingers. He watched, tense and eager. Would the next wave carry it back again, and strand it safely ; or——

The boat slewed round. Before the next wave took it, it began to travel sideways, it was caught in the grip of the current. It vanished, hidden by the jutting rocks.

Haldor went back to join the others.

They were stretched out on the sand, enjoying the sun-

shine, smoking with their eyes fixed upon the blue sky away above. Presently they rose and prepared for their work. Kirstin smoked another cigarette, watching them with a contented smile and admiring eyes.

Aksel tackled the cliff, with a life-line round his waist. He was confident, he saw no difficulty. In stocking-soles, wet to give them a better grip, he began to climb, picking his holds carefully, accurately, gauging distances with a practised eye. Haldor, tying the rope under his armpits, followed.

Alone, the climb was impossible for him ; but the rope gave security, he knew that if he slipped Aksel would hold him ; and Aksel, heaving on the rope, helped him up. He would find a secure footing on a ledge, brace himself, and pull ; and so, in time, they reached a long platform nearly a yard wide, twenty feet above the shore, and Haldor could squat in safety while Aksel set to work.

A long time passed.

Suddenly there was a cry from below, and they looked down to see Kirstin racing over the sand, shouting and waving frantically.

‘The boat !’ she called. ‘It’s gone !’

Aksel looked round. The beach was a narrow strip now, and the sea thundered upon the cliffs on either hand, hemming them in.

He began to climb down, with Haldor following. They reached the shore, raced along it, and stared at the empty advancing sea. At once Aksel stripped off his jersey and plunged into the water.

He swam straight out, raising himself now and again to look this way and that. Haldor watched him with a sour smile. The man of action, the inevitable hero ! Easy for Aksel, who never stopped to think, who had too

little imagination to see the dangers into which he plunged so recklessly.

Let him swim, let him tire himself—he would not find the boat, now long ago carried far away beyond reach, or else dashed to pieces on the rocks.

‘He’ll never find it!’ Kirstin cried, and surprised a strange look on Haldor’s face.

She had expected anxiety at least, had been prepared to see a dawning terror. She found instead a sardonic amusement, as if the situation pleased him. She caught her breath a little, biting her lip, and her eyes widened.

‘Haldor!’ she cried sharply. ‘You—you look—what do you mean?’

Panting, one hand on her breast, she faced him, astounded by the revelation of his glistening eyes.

‘You *pushed* the boat away!’

‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘I pushed it. I’m a coward, am I not? I’m afraid. I’m no good. Very well! Now we’ll see who’s the coward! Now we’ll see who keeps his head! We’re trapped. We can’t escape. The sea’s all round us—and there’s only the cliff. I can’t climb it alone. You can’t climb it alone. We’ll see what Aksel does!’

He laughed a little. He was not at all afraid. He knew that when the time came he could escape. With that certain knowledge, fear was defied.

Aksel came back in less than fifteen minutes. He was exhausted and chilled, and dragged himself heavily up to the tiny strip of sand that remained uncovered. He regained his strength slowly.

‘I don’t know how the damned boat managed to get away!’ he gasped, and failed to see the look the others exchanged. He pulled himself to his feet.

‘Come on! We’ve got to get up that cliff.’

He tied the life-line round his waist again ; but Haldor stepped forward.

‘I’ll go first,’ he said quietly. ‘I’ll take the other rope. Then you can help Kirstin, until we get to the ledge up there.’

In that order they began the ascent. It was nearly impossible, and there was no hope at all of reaching the summit of the cliff, a thousand feet above their heads. All they could do was escape from the reach of the sea.

It was slow work, aching work ; and the sea crept nearer, began spattering the cliff-foot, sending up goutts of cold spray upon them as they climbed. Haldor had no intention of climbing far—only high enough to ensure success. He steeled himself to do it, searching for the hand and foot holds he had used before with Aksel, and resolutely resisting the desire to look down.

His chance came soon.

Aksel was immediately below him, the ascent mere child’s play to him. He was impatient of Haldor’s slowness, and anxious to get Kirstin to safety without delay.

‘Go on, man !’ he cried. ‘You’re like an old woman. There’s no danger.’

Haldor seized his opportunity. He made a pretence of hurrying, and, with his hands firmly gripping a spur of rock, allowed both feet to slip from their hold. A moment of wild scrabbling, then he let his arms straighten, and his feet shot downwards, his heels striking Aksel on the shoulders.

The sudden terrific jar sent Aksel spinning out from the cliff, flung him down into the few inches of water that covered the boulder-strewn sand. Kirstin, saved by a hair’s breadth from being pulled after him, started to climb down again with a stifled scream, and Haldor followed.

Ankle deep in swirling water, they picked Aksel up. He was not badly injured ; but one wrist was sprained, and the left ankle was wrenched. He could stand only on one foot—and use only one hand.

With their backs to the rock, they faced the sea that came up round their waists at each succeeding wave, and it seemed that this was to be the end.

Aksel, his face twisted with pain, stared calmly at the sea, and turned to Kirstin with a wry smile.

‘I’m sorry, my dear. You had better try to climb again. Haldor will help you.’

There was no reproach in his eyes as he looked at his friend. He accepted the accident without question. It was just bad luck. He was prepared to face the consequences. He did not flinch.

Haldor appeared quite calm. He had himself perfectly in hand. He smiled.

‘I’m sorry, Aksel. I could not do it. And from that ledge we could never pull you up.’

Aksel’s eyes gleamed.

‘You fool,’ he snapped. ‘Save Kirstin, can’t you ? Leave me here.’

‘No.’ Haldor shook his head. ‘There is one chance. I can swim round the cliff, and perhaps climb up where it is easier, and lower the rope down to you, and pull you both up from there.’

Crazy, it sounded ; and Aksel shook his head.

‘You couldn’t. No one could swim round the headland in that sea. Look at it, man !’ He stopped, to wipe his streaming face with his wet shirt-sleeve. He had to raise his voice, for the waves were round them now, hurling themselves against the cliff, and they had to struggle to keep their feet and fend themselves off the rock.

'I can do it,' Haldor shouted confidently. 'It's the only chance. If you and Kirstin can climb up a bit——'

'Take Kirstin with you. Leave me here.'

'No ! I stay with you, Aksel. Haldor can go alone.'

Her eyes flashed, her tone forbade argument. Haldor shrugged his shoulders.

Calmly, he waded away from the cliff. He had no fear. A few minutes to swim out beside the reef, then let himself be carried on the swift current out and round the point, and he was safe. He was lifted off his feet on the crest of a wave that sent him surging back towards the cliff, but he struck out strongly, and tried to get his line, to avoid the sunken rocks against which he might be dashed.

Kirstin, taking the thin brown life-line, edged along the cliff towards the point, helping Aksel to hobble beside her. Then, when she could go no farther round, she reached for a crevice and pulled herself up out of the water. By the time she had reached a foot-wide ledge, where she could brace herself and find a spur of rock round which to lash the line, Aksel was fighting to keep his feet, each wave sweeping over him. She called, and he tied the life-line round his waist and signed to her.

She pulled on it, and, a few inches at a time, he began the ascent, until at last he was beside her, safe from the sea. It meant hours of exposure and danger ; but their spirits were strong, they would not give in or admit defeat, they would cling there hour after hour until the ebbing tide exposed the shelf of rock and showed them the route to Gusvik and safety.

But long before that Haldor would have rescued them, and the legend of his cowardice would have died. If, at the last moment, when Kirstin was safe and he was hauling Aksel to safety, the line slipped, or frayed and parted, and Aksel fell back, who would dream of blaming him ?

He swam with the strong breast-stroke of the Faroes, lifting his body almost to the waist out of the water at each thrust of his arms, so that he could take his breath even among the steep broken waves. He felt himself, at length, caught in the grip of the current, and, turning on his back, he allowed himself to be borne by it out past the point. It swept him on, in towards the cliffs, until the break in the sheer face showed up, until he saw his haven, and the stair-way leading up, leading to the place from which he could lower his rope to the others who waited.

He smiled a little, preparing to swim again, to hasten his landing.

The current was swifter than he had remembered. It carried him near, until he could distinguish the breakers smashing upon the tiny stretch of sand, until he could see into the sounding ocean caverns that yawned under the cliff.

The caverns receded.

He began to strike out towards the shore. The shore receded. Steadily it retreated from him, and now he was facing sheer cliff again, now he was well past the haven.

He fought furiously. He put every ounce of his strength into each stroke of hands and feet. But he knew it was useless. The current that, a few days ago, had landed him high and dry in the tiny cove was setting now parallel with the shore and, in a few minutes more, out to sea.

He understood ; and at once his brain went numb, his gorge rose, choking him, his limbs threshed uselessly.

He went with the current, because his strength could not combat it, because the tide of panic had gripped him too—straight out to sea, straight out into the interminable wastes of the North Atlantic. And then he was beyond fear.

.
Hours later, when Aksel and Kirstin made their painful

way down to the beach, and along the beach to the shelf that the tide had uncovered, they turned to look out to sea.

‘So,’ Aksel said, with a heavy sigh. ‘We were wrong. Haldor was not afraid.’

‘No,’ Kirstin assented gravely. ‘He was not afraid.’

IN A RAILWAY WAITING ROOM.

*They sit and rise and come and go,
Like human tides they ebb and flow ;*

*Silent they sit, each in his place,
With patient, bored or anxious face ;*

*Their thoughts to regions far and strange
Across a lifetime’s memories range ;*

*Their bodies touch and yet their souls
Are far asunder as the poles ;*

*Each in his own dark world is pent,
Each on his own concerns intent ;*

*A restless, ever-changing stream,
Like phantom figures in a dream ;*

*And whence they came and where they go
We know not, nor shall ever know.*

DAVID B. CUNNINGHAM.

Toronto,

THE ROAD TO CHINA.

BY C. C. VYVYAN.

IN the autumn of 19— I rented, for twelve months, a small unfurnished house in Polurrian. After three years of travel, with never a day for dreaming, rest and meditation, I sought only a place where nothing ever happened, with people accustomed to monotony.

‘Polurrian,’ a friend assured me, ‘is the very nook for you, a little whitewashed cove unruffled by world tidings, sufficient to itself, where everyone is just as sleepy as his grandfather.’

In the first ten weeks I had perhaps as many as three callers. One day followed another without new thoughts or new adventures, and it really seemed as if this were the long-sought haven. It was Christmas Eve and I was dreaming over a fire of driftwood, watching the blue flame.

‘A gentleman to see you, miss,’ said Kezia, opening the door like a whirlwind, and a very angry whirlwind, the gentleman in question having interrupted her preparations for supper; moreover, she did not consider it ‘fitty’ for anyone to call after the shutters had been closed and the key turned in the front-door lock. I rose slowly from the deep armchair, but I had turned my head quickly before standing upright, for the eye is ever more swift than the body, hastening in advance to warn of danger or to signal the impact of beauty.

A little hunchback stood just inside the door which had been slammed by that retreating whirlwind. His eyes were restless, like the eyes of a hunted animal.

‘My sister said,’ he began, without any form of greeting, ‘she said to me only yesterday that very likely you would be so kind——’

‘Of course, of course,’ I declared impulsively. ‘Do come in. And if there is anything at all I can——’

‘The North-West,’ he ventured, ‘it is a book on Mount St. Elias, I have been searching for years and years.’

‘Let me see,’ I said, more to myself than to him, ‘where exactly *is* Mount St. Elias?’

‘Ah!’ and his voice had risen from a deprecating murmur to a crescendo of disappointment, ‘I thought you were there once, my sister said you had been everywhere.’

‘I remember, of course,’ I said, racking my brains and playing for time, because all my world was now become but a feverish desire to make up for his disappointment, ‘the highest point in all the north of——’

‘You have forgotten Mount Mckinley,’ he said with the utmost gravity.

So breathless had been our interchange of words that we were both yet standing in the middle of the room, but our very lack of introduction or of previous acquaintance had promoted, I felt, a curious sense of intimacy.

‘Do sit down and tell me more—more about Mount Mckinley,’ I said, ‘and then we will have a look around my books.’

‘My sister told me,’ he began, and his eyes were starting towards every corner of the room in turn, until they finally looked down on the floor, and now I could see they were not the eyes of a hunted animal; rather he was like a man seeking escape from a vast and lonely space, eager to embrace all horizons that barred him from their secrets. He went on, never looking up again, hesitating a little before each phrase. ‘She understood that you were a great traveller—and so I

thought—as I am one who lives in a sense for travel—I ventured——’

‘Yes, yes,’ I reassured him, ‘it’s a freemasonry, of course, between all who love travel, but I’m afraid I have not very many books—I only hope you won’t be disappointed. Is it the Arctic that—’ I found myself imitating his own hesitation of speech—‘that calls you?’

‘It’s just that,’ he replied. ‘It has never ceased from calling. You see there is nothing to bewilder you up there, only water and sky and pointed reflection of each fir-tree. And the size of that country! It is more peaceful than any in the world, hundreds and hundreds of miles and all the same, and really leading nowhere in particular, so that you can rest in it and not be pressing on. You can lose yourself and find yourself at the same time as it were. Now the Tropics, they are no help at all, you are giddy at once, it is all broken up and fermenting, even the vegetable world is like a living ant-heap; there is no rest, not for a moment, you can hear things growing. The competition is terrific, rank they all are, all the forms of life, pushing, jostling, climbing over each other without any manners, all horribly intertwined. It is cruel there, each one for himself, with never any give and take. Give me the Arctic skies and the Arctic silence and the laugh of a loon on some water that never has been rippled. They say you can hear that silence crackle and then begin again. Pardon me,’ he said, looking up for a moment, ‘for talking so loudly, but you spoke to me about the Arctic calling and I knew at once that you understood.’

I was silent, ashamed at the magic of a chance-flung phrase. And then I was silent following him in spirit, hearing the laugh of that loon on the water that never had been rippled, watching, in that unrecorded union of sky

and water, the pointed fir-trees looking down upon their own reflections. Presently I said in a low voice, and really half-ashamed of the confession :

‘I haven’t ever been up there among the loons and fir-trees, but I think I heard that silence once, from a mountain overlooking the Great Barrier Reef.’

‘Very true,’ he said. ‘It would be there, of course. Waiting for you. That is the real Australia. But it seems there as if the world is not finished enough for voices, even the trees are unfinished, ragged leaves against the lemon sunset, ragged bark hanging from every tree, and the reefs and islands, oh ! more ragged than islands ever were, like black teeth in their turquoise sea. But in that North country of yours and mine, the cold country, you would feel the silence of something with a big secret, too big to be told.’

He nodded quietly to himself, keeping his eyes on the floor.

‘And that is a very different silence,’ he went on. ‘Of course there are other places you may find it. High up in those mountains where stones throw back the heat in waves of air all trembling. There are rocks where only prickly things will grow and the sunshine is cruel and very hard, un-moody, all glaring and level, it is as if you had no eyelids and it hurts, the sunlight does, and the eagle soars up there like a speck in the blue which is ever so far away, because that sky has no friendly feeling for the earth, there are never any clouds to come down in rain ; it is uninterested, a cruel sky with never a smudge on the blue. And old buildings grown into those rocks so that you can hardly tell the difference, it is just as if the mountain had swallowed up men’s work. “You’re only a scratch on my surface,” the mountain says, “and I don’t much care, no one can see you a mile away, you can stay where you are.” And old, old monks dreaming away in that mountain castle

which is really just a chip out of ages gone long ago, a chip that time has left lying about because it doesn't really matter. And anyway that old building could have no hope of its own, for the sunlight is severe, and the blue heaven so very severe with no kindness. There is cruelty and a long memory and not much hope in the silence up there. That is Spain,' he said, looking up suddenly from the floor as if he were a crystal-gazer who had seen much and now might tell his vision.

'But not in Polurrian,' he added in a low, hoarse voice, leaning towards me. 'You needn't come here for silence, there is clacking of tongues all day, every day, that is why I only go out in the evenings as a rule. It is better so in many ways. You see you never can hear your own thoughts unless there is silence, and then one fine day you might lose a really precious one in the bustle. So it's really not worth risking, is it? For one is bound to preserve them; thoughts are for preserving, aren't they? There's nothing else to preserve after all, when you come to think everything out.'

He paused and I did not dare, at first, to continue or to change the conversation, lest he should be at that very moment listening for one of those thoughts that could only be caught and imprisoned in a silence; but when the pause had become embarrassing, I asked him:

'Are you going back to the North again?'

He looked at me with a sudden expression of craftiness and secrecy, but it only passed across his features like a cloud and then he smiled.

'Why, no,' he answered; 'to tell you the truth I never have seen any of those countries, or not what you might call seeing. Travelling has never been my lot; it is a little difficult with my infirmity, you see, but the call may come any time and I must prepare myself. But of course I know

all those countries, oh yes, we understand each other just like friends, and they are all waiting for me. Some day. In fact I am particularly busy just now, preparing myself in every way. There is a language, a secret kind of language between us, and then their spirits are so much more alive than any you will find among people who walk about the earth. Don't you notice that men and women have very faded spirits, or hasn't that ever struck you? Not clear cut, you know, you can't really recognise them, they go about the world all blurred and shaky, spilling over into different shapes, one day round and another day square, or it may be shining clear like a mirror one time and all dull and mottled another time when you go to look at your own reflection in them. But the countries never fail you. They have their faces and their own voices too and you can always recognise them calling, and then they have a waiting habit of life, not rushing forward to change themselves; so that really you can count on them better than on old friends. But there's everybody must search for his own special country, it's waiting for him somewhere. I'm bound to confess——'

At this point he hitched his chair a little nearer to the fire and leaned forward confidentially, spreading out his hands to the blaze, and his hands were white and small like those of a woman, but they had a seeking gesture, as if they were ready to take hold like a bird's claw.

'Yes, I'm bound to confess I made a mistake once. I thought it was the desert. But do you know what taught me my mistake?'

His voice sank to a mysterious whisper and he looked behind him apprehensively.

'It was the camels.'

So sinister was the emphasis that he threw into this word,

it seemed as if the beasts were threatening him in some way then and there.

‘They have cruel lips, yes, cruel, sneering lips, and only a coward sneers, but that they never knew, so they went on sneering. And now I know, and there is no mistaking again once you know. Your own country ; it is a place where you can go free without looking over your shoulder ; it is a place that calls you all the time but not with a battle kind of cry, it is more like the wind’s whisper when it is just dying away in the high leaves of the forest, very soft and yet so loud it fills all that bit of the world and you don’t need to watch for anything else. You are safe there from interference, so that you can stand and look at yourself and then go ahead again, and you can wander all your days there and never meet a soul and never be unhappy nor lonely. There’s only one thing else that calls me, sometimes, just once in a way, and that’s the road to China. Now tell me, did you ever take the road to China ?’

It seemed this time as if he really expected an answer, and I could find nothing in the world to say, for that phrase, ‘the road to China,’ had mesmerised all thought ; I could see no details of the sea-route nor the overland, nor follow the windings of his imagination. Only, ringing in my ears like a great sound that obliterated sense, there was that refrain : ‘the road to China’ ; ‘the road to China.’ I got up nervously and went to the bookshelf by the door.

‘I wonder if you’ve ever read this thing,’ I said, taking out a pale green volume. ‘*About the Road*. Of course you will not find your loon, nor the Arctic firs, it is mostly European if I remember rightly, but the very spirit of the traveller comes back to you.’

I turned over the leaves, refreshing memory. He came and stood beside me and in another moment the four walls

of the little room had closed around us, and the road to China was remote as the light that never was on land or sea, and we were just two ordinary stay-at-home people, taking books from shelves and putting them in again. When at last he had chosen several volumes I reminded him of his first request.

‘Now what about Mount St. Elias? I have over here, in this upper shelf, a history of the early——’

He interrupted me.

‘Thank you,’ he said, with a finality where politeness was mingled with a quite desperate air of resolution, ‘I really have no use for mountains. They are—well, to put it quite simply—they are too high for me. Pride was always their besetting sin, no doubt you are aware of that, and it is really better to leave them to themselves.’ I don’t say it is kinder to leave them, but wiser, yes, distinctly wiser on the whole. And now I must be going home, for the stars will wait on no man. They really are not used to waiting,’ he added with a chuckle, ‘and indeed why should they be?’

He did not shake hands, but gave a low bow, then he tucked the books that he had borrowed beneath one arm, took up his hat and went out to the impatient stars.

I settled down again in the depths of my chair, bewildered. Always it has been my wont to study the goal rather than the arrow speeding thither, and thus it was that while I hardly thought at all of the unexpected visitor, my mind was a kaleidoscope of the pictures that he had raised. I heard the cry of the loon again and saw the Tropic sun go swiftly down behind those ragged trees and watched the eagle soar towards that unrelenting blue where no cloudlet ever drifted overhead. And then the door was opened and Kezia’s head came half-way round the corner.

‘Has he gone home safe, miss? ’Tis gone half-past seven by the church and supper done to a frazzle. You never gave me no orders, miss, so I let him in, but if I was you I should say “Not at home to-day,” if he comes another hevening.’

Kezia only pursed her lips mysteriously when I asked for information about my visitor, but at last her love of secrecy was overcome by her love of imparting some new thing to any willing listener.

‘Dedden ’ee ever hear tell, miss, how he was putt away?’

‘Putt away?’ I enquired. ‘What is that?’

‘Why, putt away up to Pendower asylum. Rovin’ he was, and some do say as how ’twas a straight jackutt and all. Oh! you never know with them kind, times he’s so quiet as a lamb, and that was years and years ago and we don’t say much about it, but folks caan’t help having eyes in their heads and memory too, and all I sez, miss, if he’s a-going to keep on coming after dark I’d say “Not at home to-day” to un if I was you.’

Whereupon she flounced out to dish up the frazzled supper, leaving me alone with my thoughts which, for the rest of the evening, went to and fro upon the road to China.

BY THE WAY.

ONE of our younger writers to whom the term 'modernist' may be justifiably applied has been holding forth in public on the purposes and the material of poetry. The old themes that have engaged the minds and stirred the hearts of all the great poets throughout all history are, we are given to believe, finished, *caput in fact*: nothing now is deserving of the attention of poets but politics—so this writer says. And furthermore, as no one, he adds, reads poetry to-day, all true poets must necessarily be revolutionaries, inspired by their bitter realisation of neglect and the world's wrongs. Now it is surely beyond argument that though a few, a very few, pieces of poetry on political subjects have survived their own generation by reason of their poetic power and in spite of their subjects, yet in general nothing on earth is more ephemeral than politics and nothing more arid than old political controversy—let anyone who doubts or denies this try and find stimulation in an old speech, say, on the Reform Bill of 1832. And secondly—apart from a satire or two—was anything great ever yet in the history of literature written in a spirit of bitterness engendered by a personal grievance? Our young writer's remarks are as strange a blend of ignorance and absurdity as can well be devised: they at any rate show why members of his little coterie are engaged at present in writing rubbish, and writing it with verve and enjoyment. A good many years ago now, a painter, distinguished in his day, explained the principles of his art: 'What the public want,' he cried, 'is "monkey"! Give 'em "monkey"! He gave them 'monkey' and his

pictures are now recognised to be what they always in fact were—namely, junk.

* * *

It was a Yorkshireman who told me an anecdote the other day that has the pleasing effect of a double-barrelled gun. When James I came to the throne he was distressed to observe so many of his new English subjects without shoes, and accordingly gave directions that 5,000 brogues should be sent from Glasgow for their benefit. His speech, however, was notoriously indistinct and the order was misinterpreted. ‘Of course,’ went on my friend, ‘it was easy enough to find 5,000 rogues in Glasgow: they were rounded up at once and despatched south. They got as far as Yorkshire, and there they have remained ever since.’

* * *

Even in days when an abundance of reviews and an extravagance of advertisements make it possible for many to have an inaccurate but positive knowledge of far more books than they read, one can occasionally come to rest on an oasis of happy ignorance. At a recent party a number of men and women were interestingly disagreeing about the latest book by Mr. Aldous Huxley: said a perplexed soldier, *sotto voce*, to his neighbour, ‘what is a huxley?’ This cannot, of course, compare with the historic ‘what are Keats?’ but it is nevertheless undeniably refreshing.

* * *

When is a uniform not a uniform? With the advent of the Public Order Bill, interest in this question transferred itself from Whitechapel to Westminster and is no longer debated; but it at any rate gave rise to one subsidiary enjoyment. How we all laughed when Mr. Winston Churchill, years ago, substituted ‘terminological inexactitude’ for ‘thumping lie.’ Now *The Times* has humorously

coined the delightful phrase, 'interdoctrinal haberdashery.' It was, I have always understood, an Alderman of the City of London who proposed that it would be more appropriate to have in lieu of the epitaph for a famous statesman, 'He died poor,' the more sonorous 'He expired in indigent circumstances': the suggestion would make a strong appeal to a humble friend of mine who stated with a slight shrug that a relative of his 'had married into the titular elegancies,' and, in another connection, contritely offered his 'apologetical conventionalities.' Words, words, words! Is the well of English undefiled? Many are its uses and more are its delights.

* * *

There was a time, not so very long ago, though before the War and its destructions, when a poet could cry out with the approbation of the world that 'Life is real, Life is earnest'; so converse a creed is now expressed and applauded that perhaps a note of dissent may not be out of place:

*'Life, to be sure, is nothing much to lose,'
So wrote the vaunted singer of this age
Of disillusion, scornful of the strength,
The beauty, and the passion of Man's mind,
Distrustful of Man's heart, in bitterness
Austerely dwelling. Better it were to be
A voiceless spirit, worshipper of Pan,
The jocund sun, birds' song, and sweep of cloud,
All, all the myriad ecstasies of Earth
In a green forest, under the night sky,
Or in the hubbub of the haunts of men,
Unvaunted, inarticulate, serene,
Holding dominion over one's own soul
And wearing as a tribute to renown*

*A simple happiness, a warmth of love,
Better to be a child of artless song
Begot of trifles, hopes, and transient dreams,
The whole, wide heaven of the possible,
Than it were to weave the music of the spheres
To the desperations of acidity.*

* * *

‘What made you take to this?’ asked the sympathetic old lady of the tramp. ‘Well, mum,’ he replied, ‘you see, I was too light for heavy work and too heavy for light work.’ There are few of us who at times have not felt the same.

* * *

During the distressful middle of December when the British Empire seemed, for a few tense days, to be in unprecedented danger, there was naturally much talk of the Crown and the Cabinet, much uncertainty amongst many, not merely as to what was so mysteriously happening, but also as to the respective degrees of responsibility which were being, or of right and duty should be, borne. ‘As far as the secret and changing nature of the subject permits, the book is up to date’—so runs the last sentence of the *précis* upon the jacket of Dr. W. Ivor Jennings’s *Cabinet Government* (Cambridge University Press, 21s. n.) and the secret and changing nature of the subject was never better illustrated than in December. Yet the book, though to the many subsequent editions that it will probably enjoy there will be added some reference to the singular event of a Monarch’s abdication, contains nothing in its closely documented and authoritative pages that will call for revision. Here is an admirable, scholarly account of our system of government as it has come now to exist, and it is scholarship dispensed without that heaviness which is sometimes erroneously held to be an essential concomitant; witness, for instance, this

comment on Lord Curzon's defence of the practice of purchasing titles and honours. 'So, a man who has no valour, courage, genius, talents, energy, enterprise, or power of invention, ought to be ennobled if he has money and gives enough of it away,' or the final two sentences of the book, referring to Cromwell's statement that when he forcibly dissolved the Long Parliament 'not a dog barked'—Dr. Jennings ends, 'It is, in short, a good system because it rests upon Parliament and, through Parliament, upon the willing consent of those who are governed. The dogs bark *in* Parliament ; if there were no Parliament, they might bite.'

★ ★ ★

The right time to bring out a book is a problem that continually vexes both author and publisher. 'Publish your book in the early autumn when everyone is beginning to think of long, quiet evenings by the fireside and when there is a sufficiently long interval before Christmas for it to become enough known for friends to want it for a present'—that is, no doubt, excellent advice and so excellent that such numbers follow it as to make the book but one of many thousands. Pearl Buck at least has disregarded it, but then she has a reputation deservedly established which entitles her to publish when she pleases : she will be read at any date. In *Fighting Angel* (Methuen, 7s. 6d.), just issued, she completes the picture painted in *The Exile* : that was of Carie ; this is of Carie's husband, Andrew. Perhaps men are seldom as attractive as women ; certainly the harshly fanatical Andrew cannot compare with the charming Carie, nor will his story really bear this retelling, and the new book suffers accordingly, but its Chinese scenes will ensure its popularity.

★ ★ ★

On another page an American critic of high authority makes a careful study of our eminent women novelists, the

prevalence of whom is a curious phenomenon of the times. With half a dozen exceptions—Hugh Walpole is probably the most notable—almost all our best novelists are women : I have just commented on the latest work of one, and here is another also coming ‘before the swallow dares’—namely, Margaret Irwin whose third historical novel is newly published. *The Stranger Prince* (Chatto & Windus, 8s. 6d. n.) is perhaps hardly the equal of either *Royal Flush* or *The Proud Servant* and its use of definitely modern language is just a trifle disconcerting, but it is none the less vivid and unusually capable story of Prince Rupert of the Rhine. We men must look to our laurels.

* * *

And, finally, one other, also a woman's, but one of more than a hundred years ago. The Oxford University Press has just issued the *Letters of Fanny Brawne to Fanny Keats 1820-1824* (10s. 6d. n.) and, in spite of the high price asked for so small a book and the many easily avoidable slips and misstatements in its editing, every real lover of Keats will wish to possess a copy. Such lovers have long known that the world's first estimate of Fanny Brawne was seriously unjust, that for all her youth and literary inexperience she placed a due value upon the young genius who, if Fate had not willed otherwise, would have been her husband : all may now have proof of her sorrow and her regard. These letters will necessarily have a special interest for readers of CORNHILL, who will recollect the two remarkable articles (October, 1935, and February, 1936) in which Marie Adami threw so much entirely fresh light upon the life of Fanny Keats and her unswerving devotion to her great brother : these letters are yet another chapter in the beautiful story, and for their publication we must all be grateful.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 160.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iii, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 27th February.

‘for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn
Nor ——— nor solitary thorn :’

1. ‘——— after calve cu ;’
2. ‘But were apt confessional for ——
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,’
3. ‘O —— your pity give my heart,
One corner of your breast,’
4. ‘That with music loud and ——,
I would build that dome in air,’
5. ‘I have heard the call
——— to each other make ; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;’

Answer to Acrostic 158, December number : ‘*Before—Glean’d*’ (Keats : ‘When I have Fears that I may cease to be’). 1. *BendinG* (Shelley : ‘The Invitation’). 2. *EviL* (Hood : ‘The Bridge of Sighs’). 3. *FreE* (Shelley : ‘Hellas’). 4. (Phil)OmelA (Sir Philip Sidney : ‘Philomela’). 5. *RuuN* (E. B. Browning : ‘A Musical Instrument’). 6. *EnisleD* (Arnold : ‘To Marguerite’).

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Bridges, More Hall, Stroud, and Miss Williams, Worthing, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH 1937.

PIGEON POST.

BY C. S. JARVIS.

At the end of the War in 1918 a Department was formed in Egypt to administer the deserts, viz. the Frontiers Administration, and the first difficulty it had to contend with was the maintenance of communications. The Western or Libyan Desert is 400 miles wide, and the seat of government of this Province was at Mersa Matruh, some 300 miles from Cairo ; then there were five Oases to be controlled—Siwa, Baharia, Farafra, Kharga, and Dakhla—all buried in the heart of the desert ; down the Red Sea coast there were various more or less important but isolated posts ; and the same state of affairs existed in Sinai. In rare cases a telegraph line existed, but the majority of the stations were at least 150 miles from either Headquarters in Cairo or their own Governorates, and administration was very difficult in consequence. At least, it was very difficult for Headquarters in Cairo, for they, like all Headquarters, felt the urge to control the slightest movements of the men in the outlying stations whom they felt could not possibly carry on or even eat their breakfasts without higher guidance ; but the desert men possibly found the lack of communications more of a convenience than anything else. The only things emanating from Headquarters that were worth while were cheques for travelling allowances, and steps could always be taken to see that letters containing these very necessary adjuncts to life were collected by car, whereas the ordinary correspondence, fatuous, unnecessary, and redundant, could be allowed to trickle through in the normal way on the back of a camel.

Headquarters, however, were resolved to tighten things up and in their search for some means of communication hit on the happy idea of a pigeon service. The scheme was inspired partly by the fact that Egypt was no stranger to the pigeon-post, for history relates that Saladin possessed a most efficient service in the twelfth century and maintained communications between Damascus and Cairo. Moreover, pigeons had served with considerable distinction in the trenches in France, and we were credibly informed that two at least had been awarded the Military Medal, whilst the officer in charge had been promoted to the rank of Colonel and wore red tabs. Pigeons were to be taken seriously, and all unseemly levity on the subject when the proposal was first advanced was sternly discouraged.

The first thing to do, of course, was to form a pigeon department at Headquarters, and long before the birds themselves arrived special pigeon clerks had been appointed and a *liaison* officer put in charge. He had to be called a *liaison* officer owing to the fact that he knew nothing whatsoever about pigeons beyond the fact that they could be spatch-cocked and were exceedingly good to eat. Also in certain Squares in London they would feed from the hand. This was not very much to go on, but better than nothing, and in any case it was intended to engage, immediately a suitable man could be found, a real O.C. Pigeons—a man who could meet them on equal terms.

It then transpired that the amount of real abysmal ignorance on the subject of carrier pigeons that existed in the Provinces was beyond belief and there was not a man who knew anything whatsoever about this intriguing and intelligent bird and his ways. The common belief appeared to be based on a picture one had seen in illustrated Bibles in one's youth showing Noah receiving an olive branch from the

beak of a dove; and otherwise quite intelligent officers appeared to hold the view that the carrier pigeon, having received verbal instructions as to his destination, then picked up the message in his beak, flew off with it, delivered it into the hands of the addressee and came back to say he had done it. Actually, it was not quite so easy as these optimistic officers imagined.

The carrier pigeon, it would appear, has a marked appreciation of its home even if it happens to be an amateur biscuit-box construction in a not too salubrious quarter of a Manchester suburb. 'Be it never so humble there's no place like home,' is apparently the carrier pigeon's motto, and he will return to the home roost even if he has been transferred to a most palatial establishment where there is an extensive view of a ducal demesne, the finest pigeon mixtures are supplied daily, and there is running water in every compartment. This is all very laudable, and some dealers make an extraordinary good living out of selling birds that return again and again to the home loft to be regularly re-sold until the police start making enquiries.

This, however, is only the theory of the business, for all carrier pigeons are not in the same class and they do not all breed true to type. In much the same way as a God-fearing and righteous country parson married to a lady of extreme virtue out of a Cathedral Close or descended from a long line of pure Missionary stock, breeds a son who gets drunk and knocks down Belisha beacons in a car purchased with a dud cheque, so the winner of the London to Manchester pigeon race, mated to the scion of a long line of show birds with unbroken records, may produce a pair of C₃ 'camel-line loafers' who cannot find their own loft if it is only a hundred yards away, and who probably will not go into it if they do discover it.

It is said that the Japanese are so clever and discerning that they can not only detect the sex of a day-old chick but can state if the egg they are eating for breakfast would be in the ordinary course of events a clarion-voiced cock or a clucking hen, and the English dealer who sold our Administration the carrier pigeons must have possessed the same gift of second sight, for practically all the birds that arrived in Egypt were of the corner-boy, shiftless type, and not one had any real love of home.

With the birds arrived the O.C. Pigeons, who came from a good old Manchester pigeon-owning family and was one of those men you see in the corners of railway carriages in the Midlands wearing a black bowler and reading the *Pigeon Fancier*. The obvious thing to have done, of course, would have been to have entrusted the new O.C. with the selection and purchase of the pigeons he was to manage, but it must be remembered that we were a Government Department and of necessity anything that was obviously right was the last possible course to take. The result was that the O.C. took an instant dislike to the pigeons, whom he considered ill-bred and mannerless, and the pigeons retaliated by having no use at all for him.

The first thing he had to do was to breed a stock of young birds for the various Provinces and stations, and the pigeons were so good at this that at the end of six months sufficient young birds were ready to go out into the world and plans of the lofts that were to be built were despatched to the outposts. The O.C. Pigeons, who had probably done very successfully in Manchester with a series of orange-boxes, had very large and aristocratic ideas of the type of housing his official pigeons were to have, but unfortunately Finance belonged to the orange-box school of thought and allowed only sufficient funds to build the most meagre constructions.

The Provinces reacted to the situation in various ways ; the argumentative type of Governor wrote letters about it, the pessimistic completed the foundations and, having exhausted the money, stopped work ; whilst the optimistic finished the buildings and sent in an account for ten times the amount authorised and are still wrangling with Headquarters as to who shall foot the bill.

After the great loft-building controversy, which caused a considerable amount of heated correspondence into which Egyptian clerks entered with zest, never failing to pour petrol on to troubled waters in the certain knowledge that their opposite numbers would supply the necessary match, the buildings were at last constructed to the satisfaction of the O.C., and the birds were despatched to the various out-stations. Considering the amount of publicity the birds had received, their appearance on arrival was definitely disappointing, for they were just ordinary pigeons with either blue or pink shading, so much like those that flutter round the Nelson monument that no ordinary man could tell the difference. We had all, in our ignorance, expected something more closely approximating to the golden eagle or possibly the flamingo.

With the birds arrived the latest edition of the pigeon manual with the inspiring title, *Pigeons, training of, officers for the use of*——. This we found contradicted, on almost every essential point, the various screeds on the subject we had been receiving from the *Liaison* Officer for the last seven months and also upset entirely all our preconceived ideas on the subject.

In the first place, it would appear that the old touching picture of an octogenarian pigeon, with feathers down his legs and the rheumy eyes of senile decay, flying back to the old home loft after seventy years in a strange land was based

upon an entire misapprehension, as, according to the manual, birds could not be trusted to fly back to their headquarters after an absence of more than a month. That is to say, if El Arish, for instance, wished to maintain communication with Nekhl, 100 miles distant, a crate of fresh birds had to be sent there by car at least once a month, and the only satisfaction one obtained from the fatigue was that the birds they were relieving had to fly back and were not allowed to do the journey by motor.

Another very important point was that the birds in the home loft were to be exercised morning and evening by allowing them to fly round the buildings, but during the flight they were forbidden absolutely to settle on the ground or on any other building. This, apparently, was one of the worst things a pigeon could do and ranked with cashing a dud cheque on one's club, holding five aces, or other crimes of similar enormity. A special Arab policeman with a pigeon complex was selected at all stations to take complete charge of the birds and it was his task to see that nothing disgraceful occurred during the morning and evening flights. These men, according to the custom of the country, were immediately christened Abu Hammam (Father of Pigeons), and for some unexplained reason this gave gross offence. Apparently in the Arab world nobody minds having a name like Father of Oil, Father of Frogs, or Son of a Black Man, but to be called the Father of Pigeons, when one actually held the position, was in some mysterious fashion a studied insult. However, the Arabs are very much like ourselves over nicknames, and if one desires to ensure carrying an unpleasant pseudonym to the grave one has only to show annoyance the first time it is used. One of the cleanest-looking men I have ever met was invariably called Filthy, which was due to the fact that his correct name was Luker.

Arab pigeon-keepers, however, were very much better at the work than one would have expected, and the job was eagerly sought after, not so much because of the fact that the post absolved the holder from fatigues and hard patrols, but for the more Oriental reason that there was a rake-off to be earned by the sale of manure to melon cultivators. The amount received came to only a few piastres a year, but, being quite unauthorised and bordering on the illegal as it constituted the sale of Government property, it had that flavour of the good old Turkish days when everybody lived by rake-off and no one received pay.

Shortly after dawn, and again just before sunset, the pigeons were released from their lofts and proceeded to fly around in circles. Abu Hammam stood on the top of the loft with a palm branch in his hand and if the pigeons showed any intention of swooping down on the most attractive lines of the Camel Corps, where all the vulgar pigeons of the village forgathered, he would raise a wild yell and wave his wand. This would have an instantaneous effect and the birds would flutter upwards again in a shamefaced manner (one could not, of course, see the expression of shame on their faces, but one felt instinctively that they were showing remorse for their backsliding) and continue their flight around the loft.

The distribution of birds to the outlying stations naturally led to some of those purely ridiculous situations that can occur only in Egypt. Although the whole Administration had been discussing and writing about carrier pigeons and nothing else for the last six months, it appeared that there was one Egyptian officer who had never even heard of the scheme, or at any rate said so, which amounted to much the same thing, and on the arrival of the birds he gave a big dinner party at which a pigeon pie appeared as the dish of

the evening. It was very difficult to believe in the complete honesty of this particular officer as, when some great Headquarters brain had arrived at the idea of oyster culture at his post on the Red Sea and some hundreds of these bivalves had been despatched to him alive to start an oyster bed, he had on this occasion celebrated their arrival by a dinner party at which oysters figured prominently. He had, however, been most punctilious during the dinner to warn all his guests to save the shells, and these he well and truly planted in the prepared oyster bed the following day. For years afterwards these mute and shining tombstones of misplaced zeal and misplaced trust were carefully inspected by the oyster-brained official from Headquarters, who wondered why they never propagated their species.

This easy solution of a temporary food shortage, putting pigeon *à la casserole* on the table, was one that we never stamped out and was the chief reason why ultimately the pigeon post was scrapped. Another reason was that when anything really important occurred it invariably did so at a time when the loft was empty, owing to the fact that all the birds had been flown off with messages concerning purely mundane matters such as the despatch of a case of whisky, and the new reliefs of pigeons with the customary delay of the Orient had not yet arrived.

With the despatch of the young entry to their various posts, instructions in Arabic and English were issued to the effect that as the birds were young they were on no account to be allowed to breed. This is not as easy as it sounds, as the pigeon has very strong views on the subject. The Egyptian officer, or Mamour, who was in command at the Oasis in Dakhla, and who received a dozen birds, after three months sent in a return—for of course we had to render returns on pigeons—showing that he had eighteen birds instead of

twelve. Headquarters demanded an explanation, saying, 'Twelve birds only were sent to Dakhal. Please explain the presence of the additional six,' which brought from the British officer at Kharga, who was responsible for Dakhla, a reply to the effect that they had arrived in the ordinary process of incubation from eggs. A stiff letter was then despatched from Cairo pointing out that orders were being disobeyed as the birds were not to breed in any circumstances ; but it arrived too late to stop the fecund-minded Dakhla official, who retaliated by replying that he had been instrumental in bringing another six birds into the world. During the heated and lengthy correspondence that ensued as the result of this second flouting of orders, and the demand that the responsible official should be brought to book, the Dakhla Mamour continued to report cheerfully the arrival of young birds till the day when the edict went forth that the pigeons having reached the age of maturity were to be allowed to breed officially, whereupon an indignant letter was received from Dakhla stating that as no nesting-boxes had been sent it was obviously impossible for him to carry out orders. After this not a bird was produced and sterility reigned supreme in this fruitful Oasis.

The training of pigeons to fly distances is not so easy as is commonly imagined, and if the instructions had been carried out properly the complete staff of the Provinces would have been engaged on pigeon training and nothing else. Birds had to be gradually initiated, being flown one mile from their loft the first day, two miles the second, and so on till they could be relied upon to return to their home from any distance ; but this happy state of affairs was very seldom achieved. The official at Edfu sent a dozen pigeons by rail to Kharga and asked the Governor there to release them. This he did and was immediately bombarded

by telegrams asking the pertinent question when he proposed to release them. On replying that he had done so, a marked coolness sprang up between these two worthy bearers of the White Man's Burden, and the Edfu man to this day is firmly of opinion that the Kharga official is the type of individual so lost to all sense of decency that he is not above making up his deficiencies from a colleague's stock.

It was not merely a question of the birds failing to return altogether, but also there was definite proof that they lingered by the wayside and philandered not only with ordinary domestic pigeons but also with the wild blue rocks of the desert. The El Arish pigeons were notorious in this respect and the loft was filled with that particularly repellent type of backsliding husband who brings other women into his wife's house. There were several clear and very regrettable cases of a cock pigeon billing and cooing on the alighting board of the loft with a stray blue rock from the desert, what time his lawful wife was sitting inside on a clutch of eggs of which he was the father. One cannot sink much lower than this, and when an indignant letter of complaint of this conduct was sent to Headquarters, hinting that they were more or less responsible for this fall from grace, an official reply was received to the effect that a mistake must have been made as there was not the slightest resemblance between a carrier pigeon and a blue rock and such behaviour, therefore, was impossible. To prove that a blue rock is actually very much like a carrier pigeon, El Arish shot a blue rock and sent it to Headquarters with an official ring on its leg asking for a post-mortem to be made to discover the cause of death; and a reply was received in due course to the effect that the disease, a Latin one of five syllables, was caused by wrong feeding and lack of exercise, and that greater care should be taken in future.

One way and another, the pigeons provided a considerable amount of quiet fun, which was accentuated by the fact that, while the 'desert' refused absolutely to take them seriously in any circumstances, 'Cairo' regarded the pigeon complex almost as a religious creed and looked upon any flippancy on the subject as a form of blasphemy.

The grand *finale* occurred when the Director-General came round on a tour of inspection to the Peninsula of Sinai. The correct technique on these occasions is to decide exactly what the inspecting authority should and what he should not see. A tremendous lot depends upon the ability of the official in question to understand what he is looking at when it is pointed out to him, and a fairly safe rule is to avoid anything which by reason of its intricacy is beyond that understanding. In some cases this means one is unable to show anything at all, for in the East many individuals rise to eminence on an intellectuality and grasp of affairs that would be insufficient to guide the ordinary rabbit safely through life. The matter was more or less simple in this particular case, as the official in question suffered from such advanced astigmatism that he was quite unable to see anything, and therefore the difficulty of deciding whether he could understand or not did not arise.

As the carrier pigeons were still regarded as an outstanding success, it was ordained that they should be displayed and a demonstration was to be staged to prove the rapidity with which messages could be despatched across the wide open spaces. It was decreed that this should take place at Nekhl because the route between that spot and Al Arish was devoid of blue rock Delilahs and there was, therefore, less likelihood of birds going astray. By this time the standard of morality in the lofts was deplorable, for the hen birds, mindful of the saw about the sauce for the goose and the gander, were now

bringing in male blue rocks to their homes, so that as far as reliability was concerned there was nothing much to pick between the two sexes. Previously a hen with young could be trusted to fly back to the home loft with a certain degree of punctuality, but now there was no guarantee whatsoever, and mother love appeared to have vanished with the general break up of home life.

It is laid down in all pigeon manuals that birds should not be fed or watered before being flown, but unfortunately the car driver responsible for the transport of the birds discovered a huge bag of beans with the travelling crates. With that excess of misplaced zeal that is an outstanding feature of Eastern official life, he provided the birds with a wonderful 'blow-out' on the beans and then, emulating the Boy Scout and the day's good deed, gave them as much water as they would drink. This had the immediate effect of swelling the beans till the birds' crops were at bursting-point.

At 8 a.m., when the demonstration was staged to take place, the Director-General was escorted into the square in front of the Rest House to see the birds start out on their flight across the desert. Messages were written, rolled into the little aluminium receptacles, and handed out to be attached to the legs of certain pigeons that had been selected as least likely to 'let the side down.' The crates were then brought out and there was some slight delay at this point as the Arab policeman in charge of the pigeons, on discovering the condition of his charges, had to be forcibly restrained from making a savage assault on the well-meaning car-driver. The doors of the baskets were then opened, but, instead of a wild rush of wings, nothing happened and the insertion of a stick only caused one pigeon to waddle out heavily and give expression to an enormous yawn.

The Arab policeman then rushed at the crates, tipped them up one after another, and decanted the occupants, who flapped lazily to the roof of the Rest House, where they alighted heavily and sat like a row of gorged vultures. This is the worst thing a carrier pigeon can do, for, according to the book of words, the birds should ascend immediately to a great height from which they can pick up a landmark and, having done so, set out at once on their journey.

Luckily the Director-General, with his most inefficient eyes, had lost sight of the birds the moment they left their crates and, though the police and car-drivers were throwing stones and pieces of wood to dislodge the pigeons from the roof, he remained gazing rapturously upwards at the skies overhead where he had been informed the birds would ascend immediately.

‘Aha, I see them,’ he said, peering through his thick lenses, and looking upwards the horrified officials realised that Sinai had come to their rescue, for a hundred feet or so above a flight of golden eagles, possibly attracted by the pigeons, were circling in long sweeping spirals. ‘And that is the way they look for their home?’

‘Yes,’ said a mendacious official quickly, ‘that’s the way they do it, but as they take some time over it, perhaps we had better go in to breakfast.’

By the time the meal had been disposed of, and the party had come out to mount the cars that were to take them on the next stage of the journey, the pigeons had disappeared from the ridge of the Rest House roof. A hail of stones and sticks had made this comfortable perch untenable, and as there was no other seating accommodation available for several miles the birds had resentfully and mutinously set forth on their flight home. Unfortunately, however, after the cars had proceeded on their way for a mile or so a

mechanical breakdown necessitated a short halt, and whilst repairs were being effected one of the pigeons, who had sighted the car in which he had travelled the long weary road from El Arish, suddenly swooped down out of the blue and settled on the hood. He had not the slightest intention of returning to the loft by wing-power so long as there was any chance of making the journey in comfort in his travelling crate.

Scandalised drivers and officials shooed him off, but he was not to be denied and fluttered from one car to another, till finally one of his short dodging flights brought him so close to the Director-General that he nearly knocked his glasses off.

‘Is that one of the pigeons we have just set free?’ he asked.

‘Yes, sir,’ said the official who had previously achieved fame by his avoidance of the truth. ‘One of them has just returned with a note to say that our message has been received at El Arish.’

‘Marvellous—truly marvellous,’ exclaimed the Director-General. ‘I must write this up in a report.’

Luckily for Egypt, however, one of those unforeseen Cabinet changes that are so frequent in the country took place immediately after this lamentable occurrence, the result of which was that the report, which recommended the total abolition of the telegraph system throughout the Nile Valley, and the installation of pigeon post, was lost in the welter of warring political parties, and in the chaos of the upheaval the opportunity was seized, quietly but effectually, to suppress the pigeon service altogether.

CINDERELLAS OF THE BOOK-SHELF.

I.—WANDER-YEARS AT HOME.

BY W. J. BLYTON.

MAPS old and new, guide-books, ancient and modern atlases, 'itineraries' and gazetteers—can these things, usually consigned to the top or bottom shelves, become a magic carpet? They can. Gates into wonderland they can be, in many a mood, through which with Cowper we can 'make the great circuit and be still at home.' Even the dictionary may be what the young Scotsman with a sacred thirst for learning called 'fine confused feeding'—but the dictionaries, whether strange or useful, antique or ultra-modern, will be noted in a sequel later, apropos the centenary in 1937 of the birth of Sir James G. H. Murray, editor of *The New English Dictionary*.

'The tours that one makes in his own room with a Murray and a Bradshaw,' wrote Sir Edward Cook, 'are sometimes the best of all. In them the railway carriages are never crowded, the trains are never late, the inns are always glad to see you, the beds are always clean, and it never rains except at night.'

And, I would add, the soul is never chilled by some fellow-traveller's malapropisms. Nor does one get hungry and faint while dallying in 'lost' old towns and sites like Silchester, Timgad, Wroxeter and Sarum, or vanished ports like Chaucer's Topsham, Richborough, Ebbsfleet, Pevensey and Rye. Sir Edward Cook mentions the rivalry that existed between Murray and Baedaker; the former, who was the pioneer, was

‘incomparably the better. Baedeker cribbed freely and sometimes comically. The original Murray’s *Switzerland* was by John Murray the Third, who had a taste for geology. This caused him to notice in one of the southern Swiss valleys that “the slate rocks here are full of red garnets.” Baedeker misconstrued, and informed us that the rocks are “overgrown with red pomegranates.” Murray wrote for educated and leisured travellers, Baedeker for hurried tourists.’

Sir Edward Cook held that the special features of the earlier editions (prepared as long as a century ago) remain the best, ‘and one of them at least—Richard Ford’s *Handbook to Spain*—is almost a classic. Fortunately for collectors of such things, there is no run after early Murray’s (except in the case of the original edition of Ford).’

Thereupon he recounts a discovery.

‘Just not too late for use in a piece of work I was engaged upon at the time, I picked up for a few pence a Third Edition of Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Northern Italy* (1847). On looking into it I found a series of notes contributed by Ruskin, which had been crowded out of the modern editions and had escaped the notice of previous bibliographers of my author.’

Thus the good guide-book may claim to be a branch of literature : apart from Ruskin, Wordsworth did not think it beneath him to write a *Guide to the Lakes* ; Harriet Martineau also, and Mr. Arthur Salmon, a West Country poet, have done several excellent guides. What is Mr. Norman Douglas’s *Old Calabria*, what is Butler’s *Alps and Sanctuaries*, but a guide-book touched with genius ? In my own home, we have nearly four shelves filled with travel handbooks—an epitome of the travels of the family for the past forty years, reinforced now by the sixpenny photographic annuals issued by the railway companies. And, to vary Wordsworth, on the sonnet—

*'In truth, the prison unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is ; and hence to me,
 In sundry moods, 'tis pastime to be bound
 Within the guide-book's scanty plot of ground :
 Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty
 Should find short solace there, as I have found.'*

A confession : in certain moods of anxiety, of something like faint claustrophobia when in town, I have had release and the illusion of being in happier scenes from these books than, at such moments, I have been able to distil from pure literature. For some mental ills there is no cure like 'a draught of earlier, happier sights' : how free and contented one felt on *that* shore, how exquisite the calm week in *this* valley—and so on. It reminds the fainting heart that good things have been, and will come again.

W. H. Hudson stoutly denied that there *could* be a bad guide-book, and those that are good in the highest sense are beyond praise. 'A reverential sentiment, which is almost religious in character,' he wrote, 'connects itself in our minds with the very name of Murray.' Never, he thought, did these volumes become wholly out of date. When a new one comes out and, say, five thousand copies are sold, it does not throw as many, or indeed any, copies of the old book out of circulation. Editions of 1840 and earlier are still prized, not merely as keepsakes, but for study or reference. He proved it at the second-hand book-stalls, where he was offered a county guide for four or five shillings, 'the price of a Crabbe in eight volumes, or of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* in six volumes, bound in calf.' The booksellers assert that there is always a sale—the supply does not keep pace with the demand. 'There is nothing to quarrel with in all

this,' he says. 'As a people we run about a great deal; and having curious minds we naturally wish to know all there is to be known, or all that is interesting to know, about the places we visit.'

Hudson's own plan, recommended only to those who go out for pleasure rather than useful knowledge, was not to look at the guide-book until the place it treats of has been explored and left behind. I am bound to say that the method works. One inevitably misses some objects, and still more some interesting points relating to them. But vivid new pleasure in a few things found for oneself is preferable to that fainter, diffused feeling experienced when we go with a mind stocked with facts. And then, afterward, by the fireside, the book will *expound* the experience to the returned wanderer. *Now* you are reading about places you know emotionally, and every particular 'tells.'

However, Lionel Johnson differs: in *The Art of Thomas Hardy*, that scholarly discussion, he considers that knowing should precede seeing in most cases, especially in traversing foreign soil. But even at home, how shall we distil, on the spot, the meaning of some places and place-names without preparation? Any detailed map, old or new, of any shire is a museum of these survivals. Take the Latin names, with all sorts of ecclesiastical and other flavours: Toller Porcorum, Toller Fratrum, Ryme Intrinseca, Cerne Abbas, (and many another Abbas), Whitechurch Canonicorum, Minterne Magna (and numerous Magnas and Parvas), and—who would not live for a dreamy ten minutes in Fifehead Magdalen? A crowd of western villages have the prefixes Tarrant, and Gussage, and a few have Matravers as their second name. The eye is detained by Womanswold in Kent, Aston Cantlow, Wootten Wawen, Baptist End, and Rood End near Birmingham; Midsomer Norton in the

Mendips ; Beanacre and Shrivenham in Wilts ; others, comfortably rural or richly romantic, as Purse Caundle, Marsh Caundle, Caundle Bishop, Corfe Mullen, Stower Provost, Melbury Bubb, Sutton Pointz, Owre Moigne, Hazelbury Bryne, and the Chickerels. Matthew Arnold liked to compare the smack of the soil in the Saxon Shalford, Thaxted and Weathersfield with the faery beauty of the Celtic places, Velindra, Marazion, Tyntagel and Caernarvon.

Caxton's *Informacion for Pylgrymes unto the Holy Londe* gives detailed routes, fares, sights, accommodation—personally conducted tours five hundred years before Cook's or Lunn's ! It is good to trace the old Pilgrims' Ways—not merely Chaucer's from Southwark along the Medway side to Canterbury's 'holie blisful martir,' but the northerners' with their halts as at Coventry where the gild merchant kept 'a lodging house with thirteen beds to lodge poor folks,' with a governor 'and a woman to wash their feet and whatever else is needed' ; and the foreigners' Way, so pleasant to follow on a summer's day, from Southampton through Hampshire (above Alton, where I have sat by the hour with only the sibilation of the wind, and larksong) and Surrey (a lovely stretch, this, from Caterham up over the long, long hill into Merstham, with the following view of White Hill and that grand Surrey range) or past 'St. Martha's' (St. Martyr's) on the ridge over Guildford. The Ways follow the flanks of the downs, avoiding villages ; marked sometimes by old yews, here a minor road, there a grassy track, and latterly a few crossed by an arterial road along which land-liners hurtle day and night. These quiet routes are even more fascinating to trace than the Watling Street, Icknield Way, and Stane Street of the Romans ; for they are nearer to us in sentiment.

The old-time Tour or Itinerary is a great 'escape.' Take

old William Lithgow, the Scot, who claimed that he had walked over 36,000 miles (refusing lifts) and in 1640 published *The Total Discourse of the Rare Adventures and Painful Peregrinations of Long Nineteen Years' Travels from Scotland to the most Famous Kingdoms in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Perfited by Three Dear-Bought Voyages in surveying Forty-eight Kingdoms, Ancient and Modern; Twenty-one Republics, Ten Absolute Principalities, with Two hundred Islands*. A man, you perceive, of good wind. What finally broke him was imprisonment at Malaga, in Spain, as an English spy, and subsequent tortures. He was rescued and sent at King James's expense to Bath to recruit his shattered frame. However, he died in 1640 while attempting to secure redress before the Upper House. Nothing in the Hakluyt Society's publications has more the air of a realised day-dream than this peripatetic's narrative—prefiguring the restless Walking Stewart of whom De Quincey wrote.

George Sandys, a wandering son of an Archbishop of York, was continually on the move at home and abroad, and his work ran quickly into seven editions. And in what idiomatic English James Howell wrote his *Familiar Letters*. He first travelled for patent glass, then as diplomat, as secretary to Lord Scrope, president of the North and to our Ambassador in Denmark; from Fleet Prison—where the Roundheads put him, because he had been Charles I's Clerk of the Council—he went on writing; as he did on his liberation, to be first historiographer-royal, till the tale of his works mounted to forty. He poured out information generously, as a ton of coal is shot into our cellars—on the drinks, diets, oaths, dialects, games and dresses of various parts of this country and others.

The public appetite for travellers' tales was not to be satiated—even when Camden entered with his *Britannia* and

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun with his discoveries of North Britain. Charles Cotton, besides translating Montaigne and continuing *The Compleat Angler*, wrote a journey through England to Ireland, anticipating Anstey's *New Bath Guide* and Thackeray's *Irish Sketch Book*. John Evelyn found out all that was to be known about our woods and forests, and spurred landowners to vigorous reboisement. Defoe (who helped to negotiate the Union with Scotland) was a fascinating guide in *A Tour Through Great Britain* when wool (a subject he understood, for he traded in it) was our staple industry. John Aubrey's chronicles are a mine of local gossip and topographical charm. Arthur Young later went about incessantly rooting out farming secrets, as Cobbett did in his *Rural Rides*. Gray was first to appreciate fully the Lake District, and surpassed Dr. Johnson's *Tour to the Hebrides* in his appraisal of north British landscape. Smollett, of course, was a very locomotive person, and Fielding ended his life travelling. The picaresque novel met this thirst. Half the secret of Byron's early vogue, with *Childe Harold*, was that it was versified description of places and events. His friend Galt, as a change from Ayrshire descriptions, wrote travels and *The Wandering Jew*.

To-day, holiday-makers, cars and bungalows may have obliterated some of the flora and fauna described by the Rev. Henry Wood generations ago in *A Week at the Lizard*—but out-of-dateness is, in some moods, a positive recommendation to a book for an idle hour. Consider, in that light, a last-century account of Hampshire, with maps. From this I see that the little branch railways had their distinctive names; that was the day before amalgamations. Cycles were a novelty under the name of 'machines,' and the attitude of the countryside toward them was uncertain. 'School boards,' the writer feared, 'may work a change in

the vernacular,' and he suspected the Government of the time of designs to build camps in the Forest where, moreover, there was then 'a total want of public conveyances. Driving, of course, costs money, at the usual posting rates.' The Verderers in their courts of Swain-mote representing the rights of commoners are described with a leisurely charm, and we are at once in contact with Norman Forestry laws, the chase, and curfew. The Twelve Apostles on Burley Hill are a dozen glorious oaks no more. In our anonymous guide's day, horse fairs flourished under the shadow of Romsey Abbey; and 'we need not say much as to the horse-coach excursions, because their conductors are apt to be only too loquacious in giving information and what they take to be amusement.' Were he with us to-day, he would not be so austere: our drivers, with hands on the wheel and eyes fixed on the road, do not consider that to amuse us is among their scheduled duties. At Brockenhurst, 'a pair of *brick* houses of gentility hint at a rising resort': what would he see and say to-day? Tastes have changed in landscape. *He* agrees with old parson Gilpin that these 'tracts of healthy country are larger than picturesque beauty requires.' Moors and downs cannot be too spacious for us to-day. It appears too that 'Mr. R. L. Stevenson' had just decided to take up residence on the West Cliff, near the 'ragged moor.' To speed at forty-five miles an hour on metalled roads was not then a kind of consummation.

Here next is a book of the 'fifties by a Northamptonshire man on some beloved villages and recesses. It is not at all necessary to know a shire, except superficially, to be able to savour the beauty which affection and curiosity (minus genius, it may be) distil from, say, Northampton, 'The Drapery, Bridge Street, the Mayorhold and Horse Market,' described with almost Dickensian enthusiasm, and not

fearing to give the names of stallholders and shopkeeping burgesses.

‘Midland though we be, and thoroughly English, there is yet something about the markets here which recalls Continental characteristics, Rouen or Treves or Amsterdam. We jot down our impression of this picture because, for aught we know to the contrary, this may be the last year of its existence.’

It was, almost. And therein lies the value of these mementoes. They give us something ‘which, having been, must ever be.’ Fish at these markets was a special importation, chiefly in the hands of the guard or the coachman of the stage coaches, who brought down from London sole or salmon or oysters by individual order. The mails were but magnified ‘tranters’ or carriers. England was in a sense a collection of villages, and the personal touch was everywhere.

Edna Lyall contributed to another guide-book I possess, in which she deliberately depicts an old country town as she knew it long ago when she played in Archbishop Sumner’s garden. Barham of *Ingoldsby Legends* fame was an authority on his home city, Canterbury. In fact, great minds love little subjects—local data—they can read so much into them. Arnold Bennett once declared that a little enquiry into the history of your own environment is one of the most absorbing and profitable diversions that can be conceived :

‘It will banish ennui and quite cure the common distressing illusion that one’s town, district or suburb is humanly less interesting than, say, Canterbury, Warsaw or Constantinople. . . . Curious that people should assume that where they live is a fixed, changeless fact, instead of being as it is a living, constantly evolving organism. The very stuff of history is in the stones and bricks, roads and lanes around you. The mere Ford car is a proof, first, that Colum-

bus discovered America ; and second, that America discovered you.'

Maps, new or old, are in some moods equally engrossing. Ability to pore over them is as great a felicity as to be able to read a music score, or another language. I would instance 'the Globe after the Map made by Martin Behaim of Nuremberg, 1492.' Navigators, I suppose, made something of it ; but it was essentially for home-staying dreamers. Boreas and Euryclidon with puffed cheeks fill the sails of the vessels on the main, dotted with isles that have Latin names ; mermen and mermaids disport on those perilous seas ; creatures like the Loch Ness monster writhe in the corners, at the Polus Antarcticus and Polus Arcticus. Here we may wander like Ulysses over vague and wavering frontiers, evading customs and *octroi* demands, free as the albatross which the ancient artist suggests. Such maps it was that Chaucer knew, in a time when 'palmeres seeken straunge strondes.' It is good—fun I nearly said, and why not ?—to compare the variations in frontiers down the centuries, the rise and fall of cities, the thickening of towns, the ups and downs of rivers, ports and high roads. Better still, to brood, with that apparent aimlessness of attention which yet takes so much in, upon a large and very detailed map of England, or of your shire ; to 'make the great circuit and be still at home,' and put a girdle round the earth.

For worried people who dread the hour of bedtime, and the prospect of insomnia, I know no such 'dormative to take to bedward' as a kindly glass of something by the fire-side, a cigarette, and a good scale clear map through which one may loiter or skip, speculating on this little pleiad of villages, that other range of hills, the mysterious zigzags of the roads, the looming here of a cathedral city, the meander-

ings of a river. And the comparison of place-names in different shires—thorpes and bys in Lincolnshire, wich in Norfolk and Suffolk, hurst in Sussex, and so on. Therein it is possible to trace over again, without fatigue, a long-gone journey, or play with the plan of a future one. An ordnance survey map of the ten miles round my own hamlet is a favourite outing of mine ‘when ways are foul and fields are mire.’ Almost as much as the guide-book of some remembered spot, but not quite, it flood-lights the tired or desponding mind with former sunshine, wholesome weather of the spirit, scenes of ‘long and merry ago.’ Nothing that Stevenson ever wrote gave him half the pleasure of inventing the map for *Treasure Island*; by it, he wrote the mere story!

Bring no critical mind to the perusal of the guide-book illustrations, but rather stare at them and *into* them with that half-conscious reverie of childhood which sees far, and identifies itself with the spirit of a scene however roughly etched, weaving a story round them. A great boon, these illustrations, to those who feel imprisoned in the everydayness and staleness of routine; who are too busy or too poor to get away; who are hag-ridden for the time by some all-too-human trouble or fear which is eating the heart out of them. Turn the leaves slowly till you come to the picture which is for *you*; it is probably there, waiting, a charm against the blue devils, an assurance of the abiding sanity of the great out-of-doors . . .

‘*Be patient, for the world is broad and wide . . .
All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to the wise man ports and happy havens.*’

I am tired of hearing that there’s a wind on the heath, brother; night and day, stars, etc., all sweet things. Still, they do exist, guarantees of the central sanity and health

of the world, however racked your human affairs may be at the moment ; and instead of letting the rats go round and round in your head and gnaw your nerve, remember the bright seas break and crash still round those weedy rocks where you sat in the summer of '32, heather and broom burn on the moors you walked in '34, and still the comfortable farm sounds ascend from the village of Little Ridding where you pottered, free and happy, three years ago. Tell yourself a story, as R. L. S. did :

‘The inn at Burford Bridge in Surrey, with its arbours and green garden, and silent eddying river—though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma—still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind those old green shutters, some further business smoulders, waiting for its hour. I have lived there in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place ; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning, nothing befell. The man or the hour had not yet come ; but some frosty night, I think, a horseman shall rattle with his whip upon the green shutters.’

The universal is the true antiseptic ; living with one’s private cares is toxic. Guide-books, maps, albums of picture-post card souvenirs are the cure when we are not quite in the mood for greater prose, poetry and music. Even the unwilling egoist or invalid has a mind and imagination far bigger than his malady, and it can take in other things besides personal fears or anxieties—a thousand fragments of rural England, vignettes of seashore, the lifted sky-lines of the Downs, the good bustle in market towns, the gleam of rivers, the song of night-winds. That talented truant Stevenson found that

‘one place suggests idleness ; another, early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. The happiest hours of life are those which fleet by in this attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race.’

After many buffetings Hazlitt found that ‘this dreaming existence is the best’ ; and again, ‘Oh, it is great to shake off the trammels of the world—to lose our importunate personal identity in the elements of nature and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties.’

Are the old guide-book, photograph and painting to become the last link with country beauty ? F. W. H. Myers thought so. ‘The natural sanctuaries of England,’ he wrote, ‘“the last region which Astraea touches with flying feet,” will be sacrificed—it is scarcely possible to doubt it—to the greed of gain. Yet the ever-springing affections of men may inspire some new landscape with a consecrating history and a silent soul.’

And there is still another private wicket into the wide, wide world, which we will open and adventure beyond, in a further talk.

(To be continued.)

PHISTO'S MESSAGE.

BY J. M. SCOTT.

SLOWLY, methodically, Phisto Evelyn made himself comfortable in the front cockpit of his small machine. He adjusted his goggles, pulled on his gloves and tested the controls. Then, suddenly impatient, he waved away the Eskimos who were holding the wing-tips and, without a glance at the men who had come to see him and his companion off, pushed forward the throttle lever.

'Good luck and . . .' Fenton shouted. He had meant to say something encouraging to the smiling youth in the back seat, but a sudden blizzard of cold air and snow-grains thrust back by the propeller drove him gasping from the 'plane's side. For a moment the little machine stood shuddering: then, overcoming the frosty grip upon her skis, she began to glide forward, faster and faster, over the smooth snow which covered the ice of the fjord.

Simon Wentworth tensed himself for the thrilling experience of rising above the earth for the first time in his life. But so level was the run-way, so still the air, and so gradually did his pilot pull back the joy-stick that he did not realise he was flying until the machine was twenty feet above the snow. Before she reached the head of the fjord, where a forest of stones and boulders marked the termination of a dead glacier that protruded like a tongue from the great white face of the Ice Cap, Phisto banked the 'plane in a climbing turn and swept back down the fjord, gaining altitude.

Simon, glancing at the altimeter, noticed that they were

now 500 feet up, and, with a faint but pleasurable feeling of importance, jotted down his first temperature observation. Not many people, he thought, were given a responsible job to do on their first flight. He wasn't just a passenger.

He wanted to make a remark into the speaking-tube, but the uncompromising back of Phisto's leather-covered head silenced him. The man did not seem glad of his company. Simon, a romantic and companionable youth, was sorry. He admired this dour and fearless pilot even though he had been so often snubbed by him during the expedition. Surely this adventure which they were to share would break through the fellow's armour of aloofness. But the back of Phisto's head, Simon reluctantly decided, didn't look as if he considered this flight as an adventure : he seemed more like a man who has been forced to take the wrong girl home after a dance.

Therefore Simon decided not to say anything just yet, and looked down over the side of the machine instead. He was relieved to find that he was not at all scared by the altitude. The Eskimos, he saw, were still frozen to the ice, gazing upwards ; but the Englishmen were strolling back towards the hut. Fenton walked alone, slowly, as if in thought. He was, in fact, thinking about the two men now almost 1,000 feet above him. He was not worried about the success of their flight, which was merely a routine matter of collecting meteorological data between the coast and the middle line of the great Ice Cap ; but being a student of human nature—as every exploratory leader must be—he was pondering the different temperaments, the very different outlooks on life, of the two men above him. Simon Wentworth was a likeable fellow—strong, friendly, eager, ready to try anything—almost too ready. This was his first expedition, but during the early winter he had

promised well. Certainly he had not had a thorough testing, but Fenton believed that he would be a good man for the long sledge journeys over the Ice Cap, which he had planned for the next spring and summer. That was why he had decided to send him as observer on this flight. The work of scribbling down thermometer and barometer readings was easy enough, and the experience would teach the boy something about the form, the varying surface and the immensity of the Ice Cap, which so far he had only glimpsed from the safety of the coastal base. The fear that comes of finding oneself a hundred miles from the nearest particle of life, or the boredom of seeing nothing but endless white undulations, might help to make him consider this business of exploration as exacting a job as any other.

Why, Fenton wondered, did Phisto dislike the boy? He was far too good a traveller actually to quarrel with a fellow member of the expedition; but in his blunt way he had made it very clear that he didn't want an observer on this flight. All he had said in reply to Fenton's argument was: 'Keen? Yes, he's too damn' keen. And he's read too many books. He'll be dropping Union Jacks all over the Ice Caps, and one of them is sure to get caught up in the controls.'

Fenton, knowing his pilot, had laughed and told him not to be an ass. With that the matter was settled, for Phisto always carried out his leader's wishes even though he might first express his disapproval of them. But he never spoke twice on any subject. Usually he did not speak at all.

He had been seven years at this business of exploratory flying: flying at 10,000 feet above jagged mountain ranges to make photographic surveys of them, flying across the barren Ice Cap to discover how its weather varied from the sea's, flying up and down the coasts of Greenland and Baffin

Land in search of landing-grounds on what may some day be the aerial highway between Europe and America. He knew all there was to know about the business. He appeared not in the least excited by it, not in the least afraid. By some means, logical or semi-miraculous, he could be trusted to get himself and his companion out of any adventure. That was why Fenton liked to put the new-comers in his charge.

Mentally and physically he was striking—tall, angular, with stooping shoulders, thin black hair and thick black eyebrows, deep-set and disconcerting eyes. At the Base 'Mephistopheles' lived his own life entirely, ceaselessly smoking a pipe which he filled by shaving plug tobacco into it with a large, bone-handled knife, so that the thumb of his left hand—a long, bony hand with black hairs on the backs of its fingers—was serrated with scores of tiny cuts like the crevasses on a glacier. On a flight he nursed his engine and his companion alike with the minute yet callous attention of a true mechanic.

So much was known to every member of the expedition ; but even Fenton, who had shared with his pilot those supposedly intimate moments engendered by loneliness and danger, could do little more than guess at the man's earlier history. It was not that there was any lack of stories about him ; but since the subject of these tales would neither confirm nor confute them, they only served to add glamour to his reputation. Most were manifestly exaggerated, but some, Fenton decided, might well be true. For instance, Phisto's great knowledge of mechanics and of scientific matters in general proved that he had worked hard in his early years. It was a fact, too, that he had once held an important post in a big engineering firm. But then, apparently, something had happened—was it the death of

his wife ?—which had destroyed his ambition. About the years that followed there were many stories of suicidally daring exploits. Fenton did not believe them. He knew that Phisto lived a life more dangerous than that of other men, but he knew also that he used risks as coldly, and for as precise a purpose, as he used a spanner. Once, though only once, Phisto had come near to confirming this in words : ‘ You needn’t be afraid I’ll give in,’ he had said. ‘ I can wait. And I’d never risk a life besides my own. Only, when I’m alone, I like to get near enough to Death to spit in his face—and then walk away unharmed.’

His creed appeared to be that some day he would be free ; but till then he must achieve useful ends with the peculiar gifts of one who has nothing more to lose. So he had fallen in with Fenton, who was also something of an idealist ; and the two men had worked harmoniously together, though with few words. Year after year they returned to the cold, exacting North.

There is little wonder then that Fenton, though he was thinking of the two men above him, felt no anxiety for their safety. The month was February and the days were very short, but the flight should not take more than a couple of hours each way. And even in the unlikely event of a forced landing the men should still be safe, for their machine carried snowshoes, sleeping-bags, a small tent, a paraffin stove and a fortnight’s food for each man, contained in separate canvas bags lashed to the fuselage.

Phisto Evelyn, who had himself packed these stores and tested the engine, was as little anxious as his leader. Sitting at ease in his cockpit, he continued to climb in slow spirals till the machine was 3,000 feet above the Base.

‘ Heavens, what a view ! ’ came Simon’s voice through the earphones.

Phisto said nothing, for there was nothing to say ; yet he, too, felt a glow of wonder as he looked about him. For a winter's day the visibility was marvellously good. The coast was clear for a hundred miles to north and south. It was a deeply indented coast, and its long, thin fjords were frozen and snow-covered, prisoning the icebergs which had drifted into them during the last summer. But farther out these smooth sheets of ice were broken into floes which from this altitude looked like paper boats on a pond. Beyond these again was the grey-blue of the open sea, stretching to the eastward until it met the sky. The coastal mountains were tall and massive, formed of black basalt. They leaned their shoulders against the convex mass of the Ice Cap, holding it back from the sea except where a glacier escaped between them to reach the head of a fjord. The Ice Cap itself, Phisto thought, looked like a bank of stratus clouds seen from above ; only its surface was not horizontal : it sloped up gradually to the westward until it was 9,000 feet above sea-level.

Hating the Ice Cap for its death-like peacefulness, Phisto turned his machine towards it, yet kept her climbing that she might maintain an even height above the sloping ice. ' ' It's getting cold—twenty below already,' said an excited voice through the speaking-tube. ' What d'you think it'll reach ? '

' Absolute zero,' Phisto answered. The boy's eagerness jarred. What was there to get excited about ? New-comers were too often like that : they thought it clever to be uncomfortable—instead of damn' silly.

Flying at 100 m.p.h., they left the mountains and the sea behind. Gradually the view lost its variety : the black peaks dropped below the horizon, and the little machine flew on over the white and lifeless desert which seemed to

stretch endlessly on every side. Phisto hated the Ice Cap for other reasons besides its death-like tranquillity. Although the visibility was excellent, he might, for all practical purposes, have been flying blind. Because there were no landmarks he had to depend entirely on his instruments for judging his direction, speed and altitude. His lateral drift, in the wind which blew obliquely across his course, he could not judge at all. Therefore he knew that he could not hope to steer straight back to the Base. He decided that when he turned he would fly down wind to reach the sea at a point which must be south of his destination, then turn northwards along the coast until he recognised the mountains near the Base. Later, knowing the length of this coastal leg and the angles to it of the other sides of the triangular course, he would be able to plot the flight and the positions where the meteorological observations had been taken.

Meanwhile he thought only of his engine. His whole being became tuned to its steady throbbing as if it were the beating of his heart. If it should falter, his life, and the life of his young companion, would be in instant danger.

Simon's mind was not so fettered. He must keep a check on the time, and every quarter of an hour go through the unpleasant business of taking off a glove and jotting down his observations. But for the rest he could let his thoughts wander as he pleased. He was not in the least anxious. He had complete confidence in his silent pilot. At the back of his mind there was even a half-acknowledged hope that they would make a forced landing—run out of petrol or something—and have to make a hard and thrilling journey to the Base. If Phisto had known of this thought he would have cursed his observer for tempting Providence. Simon was innocent of that intention, but being confident of his young strength he longed to test himself under the same

conditions that his heroes had striven. For years he had been reading about the Arctic, and it had seemed the greatest moment of his life when Fenton invited him to come to East Greenland. But neither the warm, bright days which had greeted them, nor the damp bleak weather of a coastal autumn near the Arctic Circle, had fulfilled his picture of the North. But the great Ice Cap was all that he had dreamed and more—limitless, desolate, mysterious. Up here men and dogs had struggled to fulfil some of the greatest journeys in the history of polar travel. Across a plateau like this Captain Scott's party had struggled to the South Pole, and failed to return. This was the real thing. Only he wished that he need not keep still. The cold, which at first had only tickled his skin, began to take a firmer and firmer grip upon his limbs until its hard fingers seemed to be pressing painfully into his bones. It hurt to breathe. He wouldn't mind if only he could walk.

'Couldn't we land—just for a little?' he called through the speaking-tube.

'Why?'

'To examine the Ice Cap and—and get warm.'

'The Ice Cap is best from a distance,' Phisto's gruff voice came back. 'If we stay in the air you'll be warm within two hours. If we land you may never be.'

They flew on, with the steady drone of the engine in their ears. Simon thought: 'The engine must be boiling hot. Funny to think of it only a yard or two away from me when I'm so cold.' Phisto was thinking: 'She runs well at these revs. But the air must be thinning. Nine thousand feet by the altimeter. That makes the Ice Cap about eight thousand here. Been flying for an hour and twenty minutes. Allowing for wind and climbing at the start, that should mean a hundred and ten miles. Forty more to the highest

point—say twenty-five minutes. Lots of petrol, oil pressure all right. But I'll be glad to turn : that boy's a responsibility.'

He sat at ease in the front cockpit, holding the stick in his double-gloved right hand while he thumped his thigh with his left. When the fingers came to life again he changed hands and thumped his other thigh. He kept the machine pointing just above the line where blue met white, and on a compass bearing of 310° . The steady turning of the engine vibrated comfortingly through his body. Simon, meanwhile, longed to share the engine's warmth.

The steel-blue sky remained clear except for a few feathers of cirrus cloud ; but on ground-level the wind was getting stronger. Little wisps of snow blew from the crest of every drift so that the surface of the Ice Cap looked like a ripe cornfield with its stalks bowing to a gale. '

Simon admired this change and remarked on it. Phisto grunted, 'It looks fine from here, but . . .' He stopped suddenly. That half of his brain which from the first moment of the flight had been tuned to the engine recorded a new sound. He leant forward, listening intently. He heard nothing stranger than the beating of his heart, but thenceforward his ears were strained almost intolerably to catch a repetition of that jarring note. At last it came, and the sound was almost a relief because he had been waiting for it so tensely.

'But what ?' asked Simon's voice.

Phisto was puzzled by the question, till he realised that the boy's last train of thought had not been broken. He had noticed nothing. 'But it looks better than it feels,' he said.

If he had been alone, he might have risked holding his course for another quarter of an hour to obtain the final observation. As yet he could trace no definite trouble in the engine, and he liked to round off a job he had begun.

But, if the worst happened, that extra fifteen minutes might add forty miles to a difficult march. With an inexperienced companion it wasn't worth it. He swung the machine round left-handed through 135° and headed her down wind. At least he would stick to his plan of following a triangular course.

'Hallo, have we reached the middle line?' came Simon's voice through the earphones.

'Near enough.' Phisto was in no mood to go into details. He was more than ever annoyed with his companion since he had been the unwitting cause of modifying the plans. To make things worse, the engine now seemed to be running perfectly. Phisto could usually trust his instinct or his ears to detect a fault before the gauges did; but perhaps this time he had been wrong.

Again Simon interrupted him: 'I say, there's a lot of oil coming out of the engine. Doesn't that matter?'

At the bottom of each cockpit was a trap-door-covered aperture through which survey photographs were taken. Phisto pulled up his trap and saw a spray of oil flying back below the fuselage. His engine was bleeding to death.

He thought slowly and logically, as was his habit. On the ground he could probably find and repair the fault quite easily—a joint worked loose or an exposed pipe blocked by over-cooled oil—and then replenish the sump from the spare cans. He glanced down at the Ice Cap, a thousand feet below. The strengthening wind was now hurrying the snow along in a stream which half-obsured the surface. It would be extremely difficult to judge a landing. Besides, he had noticed before the wind grew strong that the surface was as rough as a stormy sea—corrugated into snowdrifts hard as sandstone. Even if his luck and skill combined to give him a safe landing, even if he found and remedied the

fault, could he be sure of taking off again from that rough surface in rarefied atmosphere 8,000 feet above sea-level? No, he must stay in the air as long as he could. How long would that be? It was impossible to tell. But clearly his time was limited. He must try to hit off the Base direct.

He swung the machine 50° to port, so that he was flying almost on the complement of his outward bearing, but with a 5° margin to allow for the rising wind. What he needed was a landmark. Within half an hour he should pick up the tall mountain to the north of the Base. If he climbed higher he might see it sooner, but he dared not put the engine to the extra strain.

The wind which prevented him from landing was his best chance now. It was blowing obliquely from behind. Even with the engine running slowly he must have a land-speed of well over 100 m.p.h.

Having resolved the problem in his mind he answered Simon's question. 'Yes, it matters a lot. Get your compass out. If you see a mountain ahead—take its bearing.'

Simon grew anxious, but he was too excited to be really alarmed. People didn't get killed on their first flight. They would come through, and he would win his spurs. He must concentrate on the job that had been given him—watch for a landfall.

Phisto's mind was in his engine, suffering with it. It was getting hot and running harshly. He supposed it was bound to crack up long before they reached the Base. But they each had a fortnight's food. That should get them a hundred miles, even allowing for bad weather and a rough surface. Still, they must have an accurate bearing to march on. The undulating ice surface would limit their vision to a few miles. They must sight Base Mountain before they came down. The boy was watching for it, but it was still

below the white horizon. Thank heaven the low sun was behind them—and the wind. Another ten minutes might do it. . . . But now the engine was tearing itself to pieces. . . .

So Phisto's thoughts ran, as painfully he coaxed his motor on.

The end soon came. Like a racehorse caught in a bog the engine came to rest. Phisto dipped the machine's nose to prevent her stalling, and heard Simon's voice exclaim : ' There's a misty thing on the horizon—I think it's a mountain. But it's upside down.'

' Thank God,' breathed Phisto, wondering at his luck. He glanced up, looked carefully and was sure. Base Mountain was still below the horizon ; but it had been thrown up by an evening mirage.

' Get its bearing,' he shouted, and was surprised that his voice sounded so loud now that the engine was dead.

Once more he gave all his attention to his machine. But the brief distraction had cost him dearly. He had lost some 300 feet of altitude. Added to the distance the machine had dropped during the last moments of the engine's life, that left him only about 400 feet above the ice. It was too late to turn about. He must land down wind.

Phisto saw that compared to the drifting snow which masked the surface his machine appeared almost stationary. Yet he guessed that its true speed must be great. An accurate landing was essential, but he could not tell the depth of the drift. Trusting to his luck, he waited till they appeared to be floating in it : then he pulled back the stick and stalled the machine.

She took the ground quite gently, though contact with the surface revealed the secret of her speed. She was moving like a racing car, and as the tail came down she bumped

violently over a little snowdrift. For two or three seconds she sped on in a swirl of snow. Then her skis caught in a large drift, and she turned a somersault.

Simon found himself hanging a few feet above the snow. He loosed his belt and fell out in a heap. He picked himself up quite unhurt, and ran forward to help Phisto from the cockpit. But this was more difficult than he had expected. The shock had been taken by the front half of the fuselage. That was why Simon had scarcely felt it. But the pilot was prisoned between the engine and his seat.

He was unconscious. Simon tried to lift him out, but failed. He glanced round and saw petrol trickling from the buckled tank down towards the over-heated engine. He began to tear the cracked plywood with his hands. Ropes got in his way—the ropes which bound the food and sledging equipment to the fuselage. He whipped out his sheath knife, cut them, and threw the packages aside. Then he fell upon the woodwork, striving like a madman.

All this happened very quickly. In less than half a minute his bleeding hands were raising Phisto's limp body. He staggered with him for ten yards or so ; then laid him down and rubbed snow on his face. Phisto opened his eyes. 'Have you salvaged the sledging gear?' he asked.

'Yes, some of it.'

'Get it all. And pull off the skis if you can. Don't worry about me.'

Reluctantly Simon rose. He felt suddenly tired and conscious of the stiffness of cold and cramped quarters. He moved, then stopped as a long flame leaped from the engine. An explosion threw him on his back. Angrily he jumped to his feet, but could not advance. The whole machine was crackling in a haze of yellow fire. For two hours he had been cold. Now he was beaten by heat. He stood

helplessly watching while the surface snow coalesced into water which froze again as the fire died down.

He turned to see Phisto watching him quizzically from the snow, and his conscience smote him because he had not yet examined his companion's wounds. But Phisto waved him aside. 'I'll do as I am,' he said, his face like dirty snow. 'Tell me—what have you saved?'

Simon collected the packages he had thrown aside as he fought to free his pilot. There were two sleeping-bags rolled up in their long canvas envelopes, a primus stove full of paraffin, and one sack of food. The other food sack, the little tent, the snowshoes, and the skis of the machine, which might have acted as sledges, had been destroyed.

'A poor collection—but it'll do,' Phisto said. He closed his eyes, his lean face twitching, for one knee was smashed and a broken rib was pressing on his lungs.

Simon stood over him, irresolute. The sky was softly glowing with the indefinite pastel shades of a cloudless sunset; and it was very cold. Perhaps the wind was lessening; but the snow still drifted, pattering on his frost-hardened clothes like hail, dusting his hair, powdering the inadequate heap of salvaged stores. This, Simon knew, was a moment of crisis. He had been saved from the crash for some special purpose; but the cold numbed his brain from realising what it was.

Phisto's emotionless voice brought him back to reality: 'Unroll the sleeping-bags and let's get warm.'

The sleeping-bags were made of two separate quilted layers of eiderdown, covered with long sleeves of windproof cloth, the ends of which could be pulled over a sleeper's head or gathered tightly round his neck. The two men lay side by side, though only Simon ate the pemmican and ship's biscuits.

Phisto cut a palm-full of tobacco from his plug, thrust it carefully into his pipe, and lit it in the shelter of his sleeping-bag. Then he spoke in short sentences between puffs :

‘Did you get that bearing?’

‘Of Base Mountain?’

‘Yes.’

‘Good work. I congratulate you. What was it?’

‘A hundred and thirty-two degrees.’

‘Well, listen. I want you to start off on that course at once. March by night and sleep by day. You’ll keep warmer like that. The wind will be behind you. But never go on till you’re really tired or you might sleep too long. Whenever a blizzard comes up—and plenty will—roll up in your sleeping-bag and play possum till it’s over. Even so you should reach Base Mountain in ten days, so you’ll have a margin.’

‘What about you?’

‘I’ll stay here, thanks. I don’t like walking with a broken leg.’

‘All right, I’ll carry you.’

‘Don’t be a young ass. I weigh twelve stone. If there were a sledge for me to ride on it might be different. But as it is, good-bye.’

‘What about food?’

‘Don’t want any. I never did like pemmican.’

‘But if I took most of the food—even if I made good time—you’d be dead before a rescue party reached you.’

‘And if you didn’t you’d be dead before you reached the Base. Neither of us would gain by that.’

‘But, good God, are you suggesting that I should take everything and leave you to starve?’

‘Yes.’

‘I—I couldn’t. I’d be a murderer.’

‘You’ll be a suicide if you don’t.’

There was a long pause while Phisto sucked slowly at his pipe and Simon tried, but failed, to accept this unheroic though logical suggestion.

At last he saw a way out : hopefully he said : ‘If we lie here without moving we’ll need very little to eat. We might last a month ; and before that a search party will have found us.’

‘A chance in a million.’ Phisto’s voice was angry. ‘Your bearing of Base Mountain proves we’re at least fifteen miles off our course. On this undulating surface a sledge party might pass within a mile and not see us—even if we weren’t buried by drift. It might be different if they had another aeroplane. In the end they might find us—but they’d find us dead.’

‘They’d find us side by side, close to our burnt machine, and they’d be proud of us,’ thought Simon. But he did not dare to put the thought into words. Instead he said : ‘I’ll take the risk. I’ll do what I can for you. I couldn’t desert you.’

‘What good can you do ? You’ve no medicine-case. You’ve no bandages or splints. All you could do out of humanity is hit me on the head ; but you haven’t the guts for that. You think it would be fine to wait beside me till I die—and bury me decently. But by that time you’d have eaten so much of the food, you’d be so devitalised by cold, that you wouldn’t have a hope in hell of reaching the Base. Get moving and save one life at least, you blasted little hero.’

‘Steady, steady,’ said Simon, his hand on his companion’s arm. He was warmer now—more the master of his thoughts.

Phisto thrust him aside. ‘Steady ? You’d shake the Rock of Ages !’ His voice rose. ‘Don’t you realise, you

blasted young fool, that I'm in hellish pain. All I want is to die. I've no one to mourn me. You've a mother and father. I'm responsible to them—and to Fenton—for your safety. Besides, I loathe the sight of you.'

Simon grew calmer as his companion was roused. The man's anger—the helpless anger of pain—gave him for the first time a sense of superiority.

'Yes, old boy, I've a mother. My father died in the War—went down with his ship. But she'd rather have a dead son than one who had deserted his companion. I've made up my mind. You'd better try to get some sleep.'

'Oh, God,' groaned Phisto to the Arctic night.

For half an hour neither man spoke; then Phisto, steeling himself against the agony of his shattered knee and constricted lung, said in a softer voice: 'Look here, Wentworth. You've got guts and strength of mind. I admire you, and I won't try to deceive you any longer. If I had to die I'd like to do it with you beside me. But I don't want to die. I want like hell to live. As I said, there's no reasonable chance of being rescued if we both stay here. But if you run for the Base with, say, ten days' food, and leave me four—then there's a decent chance for both of us. It's a big thing to ask; but please—for my sake—will you try to get help?'

He waited anxiously for the reply. The wind had dropped to a breeze, and stars winked bravely from a cloudless sky. Surely the boy had regained his will to live.

He had guessed rightly. Simon's healthy young mind had been shocked and puzzled when Phisto had said he wished to die. His last argument appealed more to him. Yet he was not quite convinced.

'But you couldn't live on four days' food till I got back.'

'I think I could if you go fast enough. As you know, I

never eat much. I could live comfortably on less than half rations. It depends on you.'

Simon sat up. He was confident of his strength, and he had been challenged. Hadn't he once on a walking tour covered thirty-five miles a day for a week? He might reach the Base in four or five days, in spite of bad weather—it was less than a hundred miles—and be back again with assistance in no more than double that time.

'You really think I should?' he asked.

Phisto grasped his arm. 'As your superior officer I command it—most earnestly.'

It did not take long to divide the food. Simon made a bundle of his share, wrapped it up in his sleeping-bag, and slung it on his back. Then he gathered a faggot of charred wood fragments, wires and twisted pieces of metal. He could make an easily visible line of beacons two or three miles long. That and the known bearing of this place to Base Mountain would make it easy enough to find the wounded man. He didn't want to raise Phisto's hopes, but he believed he could cover over twenty miles a day. He might easily get back with assistance in less than ten days.

Phisto, warm in his sleeping-bag, soothed by his pipe and happy to see how well his plan had succeeded, lay watching with an enigmatic smile on his lean, weather-beaten face. These boy scout precautions and reassuring phrases amused him. He knew the Ice Cap so very well. No one without snowshoes or skis could cover much more than ten miles of its wind-furrowed surface in a day's march. A thirteen-stone athlete like Simon would break through the crust every few yards. He would flounder and tire quickly. But allowing for reasonable weather—and the glass was high—he would get back safely. Ten days' concentrated rations would last him for three weeks: the

extra four days' supply which Phisto was keeping would only have been a burden.

Phisto seemed to see the moves as clearly as the last stages of a game of chess : a pawn racing for the Queen line with the opposing King—hunger—after him. Unless he missed a move the pawn was bound to win. But why was he so slow in starting ?

Now that the actual moment of parting had arrived, doubts—vague doubts that were hard to express—troubled Simon's mind. What should he say ? No doubt he was doing the right thing, yet it went quite against his training to leave a wounded man. The Ice Cap was so vast, so lonely, so cruelly cold, that it seemed hopeless to travel it alone. But, no, that wasn't the reason for his reluctance. It was just that Phisto might need him after he had gone.

'Hurry up, laddy. Everything depends on your speed and strength.'

A strange prickly feeling tickled Simon's skin. 'My speed and strength,' he thought. 'By God, I won't fail him.' He stooped to grasp Phisto's hand—the long bony hand with hairy fingers. 'I won't say good-bye. I'll be back soon with help. *Au revoir*,' he said, and turning lumbered off into the night.

Phisto raised himself on an elbow to watch him out of sight. He smiled when he saw the dim figure stumble over a snowdrift and check as his feet broke through the crust. His cross-country pace slowed to a walk. He was making heavy weather of it, but he would reach the Base in a fortnight. Phisto lay back with a long sigh of relief. It would have spoiled everything if that young fool had insisted on throwing his life away.

Slowly his thoughts formed themselves, as from the first he had half-consciously meant them to. He was not

distracted by hopes of rescue. The only life Simon would save was his own. Phisto expected to die within three or four days. That was how he had always hoped to go—not violently torn from one world and hurled into another ; but left with time to adjust his thoughts, time to look forward to reunion with his wife. It was like, in boyhood, nearing the end of a school term—‘In two days I’ll be home. In one day I’ll be home. I’m going home to-day.’

He remembered the thrill of homecoming after his first term at a boarding school. He had raced the carriage from the station, following the telegraph poles which led straight across the moors. He had carried a prize in his hand—a leather-bound Browning—and it became sadly muddled before he showed it to his father. Browning : he knew how to die.

*‘Fear death ? to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place. . . .’*

How did it go on ? It was so long since he had read it. Oh yes——

*‘I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last.’*

And then, at the end——

*‘The elements’ rage, the fiend voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
Oh thou soul of my soul. I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest.’*

His father had read that poem to him, saying it was a brave creed of life : only cowards gave in, and those who took their human lives destroyed with them their hope of

life hereafter. In time the boy had lost his strong love of poetry and formed his own logical opinions about life and death. But the strength of that early teaching had remained, with the strength of a foundation which survives a building. Its influence had kept him fighting when there seemed nothing to fight for. During those years he had been afraid to think consecutively about the past. Action had been his drug. He had kept intact the memory of his wife ; but it had been a static memory, like a picture. Now at last he could re-live those six months of their life together, moment by moment ; and when the moment came—he would be ready to go, too.

Phisto lay on his back, watching the stars. The wind had been frozen to death, leaving the white world empty of life and sound. The Ice Cap had become part of Space, in which there is nothing except cold. It seemed wrong to move : wrong to lie warmly in a sleeping-bag. Well, it would not be for long. Thank God, the strong young man who had been his one responsibility would soon escape, while he himself would be claimed by the cold. First it would numb his wounds, then his brain, then his whole body. The first storm would bury him. There could be no better place in which to die. His luck had held to the end.

Phisto lay thus for perhaps three hours. Once or twice he had refilled his pipe, but otherwise he had scarcely moved. Utterly content, he watched the stars sail slowly on their courses ; and his thoughts were in the past. He was disturbed by the insistence of a sound which the snow carried to his ears—a crunching sound. Suddenly there was a shout. Phisto sat up and saw Simon staggering towards him.

His private thoughts scattered to hiding like tangible things. Phisto tried to shield them with sarcasm.

'Hallo, you've been quicker than I thought. How are they at the Base?'

Simon ignored the tone. 'I couldn't do it. I simply couldn't do it. I took over an hour to walk two miles. It was hellishly cold and lonely. Then I realised that I probably wouldn't get back in time to send a relief party: that I ought not to have left you alone.'

Phisto peered into the boy's face and saw the terror of loneliness in his eyes. The only hope was to drive it out with anger.

'You damned little fraud! You weren't afraid for my loneliness, you were afraid for your own. You thought you'd die in any case, and that it would look better if you were found beside your companion.'

Simon protested, but Phisto's shaft had gone very near the mark. He had felt so desperately helpless and lonely and tired. If he had been perfectly certain that he was doing the right thing in making for the Base, he was sure he could have won through. But to face such hardships with a mind divided had been too great a test. He had turned back along his line of beacons before it was too late.

There was a pause. Then Phisto spoke slowly and distinctly, as if to a child.

'I've already told you that it hurts me to talk: but you've made me talk more than I have in the last six months. This is my last speech, and every word is true. I've lived my life. I'm not sorry to lose it. Yours is just beginning; and if you die, it will be my fault. The only thing that worries me about this crash is that it happened when I had a passenger. If only you'll run for the coast—whether or not you get there in time to send out a rescue party—I'll be perfectly content.'

Simon, kneeling in the snow, looked about him and saw

the dim Ice Cap limitless on every side. 'Thank you,' he said at last. 'But I wouldn't enjoy my life if I saved it by deserting you. I'll stay with you till the end—on my own responsibility.'

Phisto said nothing. He gathered his sleeping-bag tightly round him. A moment later Simon followed his example, ducking right inside the flap to escape the cold.

Phisto lay on his back looking at the stars. But he was no longer thinking of the past; and his eyes showed the struggle that was going on inside his brain.

Once during the night Simon peeped out and saw a shooting star flash down towards the ice. Superstitiously he made a wish for home. Then the cold fastened like a steel trap on his nose, and he pulled the flap of his bag over his head again.

Simon woke after sunrise, refreshed and hungry. Thank goodness, there was still plenty to eat; and perhaps now that the wind had dropped they could light the stove and have a hot drink. He sat up to invite Phisto to breakfast.

Phisto lay on his back, staring at the sky from which the shooting star had fallen. He was more than half out of his sleeping-bag: his windproof smock and the woollen clothes beneath it had been torn open down the middle, so that his chest was bare. His body was as hard as ice to the touch; but there was no peace in his face. He had died fighting—as he had lived.

When the numbing horror had subsided, Simon talked to himself, glad of the company of his own voice. 'God forgive me, I oughtn't to have gone to sleep like that and left him—a wounded man—to himself. I suppose he got feverish, or his rib hurt him so much he had to get at it . . .' His voice ran on as hurriedly he scooped a shallow grave.

At the last moment he saw something in Phisto's left hand. It was a piece of paper torn from the log book and folded like the head of a dart—a fit shape for his last message. With difficulty Simon managed to force open the bony hand. Written neatly on the outside of the folded paper were some lines in pencil. 'Give this to Fenton. As a dying man I charge you on your honour to deliver it unopened into his hand.'

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A fortnight later an Eskimo ran into the Base hut with the news that a figure could be seen descending the last slopes of the Ice Cap. Fenton, just back from a fruitless sledging journey, went out to meet him alone.

In half an hour he greeted a weary man whose thin cheeks were blistered with frost-bites. As they walked together towards the frozen sea, Simon told his story—told of the crash, of his false start to the Base and why he returned, of Phisto's unselfish and unsuccessful pleading, and of his sudden death.

'What kept me going on the way back was that I had this message for you,' he concluded. 'I felt it was a kind of sacred trust to get it to you—that nothing must stop me. But I couldn't help wondering what was in it—if it was a personal message, or what. Tell me if he says I did well.'

Fenton walked a few paces aside and opened the dart-shaped message. For a full minute he was silent while the weary man stood watching him, swaying a little.

'You did just what Phisto meant you to do,' he said at last. 'And he did for you what I believed he'd never do.' Again the leader was silent, raising his eyes towards the great Ice Cap which had become his friend's sepulchre. Then he crushed the blank sheet of paper in his hand and turned back towards the sea.

CAMBRIDGE IN THE EIGHTIES.

BY WILLIAM JESSE.

How little Cambridge changes ! New buildings rise from time to time on the foundations of the old, and across the river respectable houses for respectable dons occupy what fifty years ago were open meadows ; yet, in spite of the motor-car and aeroplane, the town itself still pulses an air of the seventeenth century. In its little narrow streets, or beneath the great elms that fringe the Backs, one half expects to chance upon some Cavalier or Roundhead, nor would one be greatly surprised to catch a glimpse of Erasmus pacing the cloisters of Queens'. Mercifully the old-fashioned Tories of a hundred years ago refused to have a railway station anywhere near the colleges, and a sight of the Cambridge platform, with its horrible surroundings of white brick architecture, makes one bless the obstinacy of our forefathers.

An American, who entered Trinity in the last year of William IV, wrote an account of university life as it was in his day, and fifty years later—save perhaps in the realm of sport—conditions had little altered. Certainly by that time King's men had been deprived of the privilege which allowed them to claim a degree without sitting for an examination, nor was one any longer compelled to pass the Mathematical Tripos before being permitted to appear for 'honours' in Classics. Greek, however, was still compulsory for the Little-Go, as was also *Paley's Evidences of Christianity*. Fortunately some ingenious person turned this extraordinary piece of logic into a set of jingling rhymes under the title

of 'Paley's Ghost'—many a man has had his portrait hung in his college hall for less—and by committing these to memory one could feel fairly sure of getting the necessary minimum of marks.

There was none of that rush in the eighties that characterises present-day existence. The hansom and the growler were still the only means of transport, except one's two feet, and many a 'Head of a House' and not a few Fellows kept their landau or phaeton. Even bicycles—the old 'penny-farthing' was just being replaced by the 'safety'—were not allowed to be ridden 'within the University precincts.'

Teaching, so far as my experience went, was not too efficient. It is possible, however, that this was due, in part at least, to not having read sufficient of my subject before I went up. Many of the lecturers, whether university professors or college dons, were, to put it mildly, long past their prime. There was, apparently, no age limit. Nor was dentistry so advanced as it is to-day, and a cavern, like a huge gold mine, opening and shutting in the midst of a snow-white beard, did not make a good soundbox. One of my instructors had—in addition to a lame leg, which of course did not affect his speech—a wry neck and a perpetual cold, to ward off the effects of which he invariably tied a long grey stocking round his throat. To do him justice, however, it must be said that he was quite one of the better teachers.

This criticism, of course, does not apply to all. Many of the younger men were excellent. Roberts of John's—whose early death deprived both his college and university of a brilliant personality—Marr, afterwards Professor of Geology, and Heycock of King's among others were first-rate in their respective subjects. Another delightful fellow was Arthur Shipley—later on Master of Christ's—who was a most cheery

soul at a period when dons were still prone to maintain an air of aloofness towards their pupils.

There must be still some who remember dear old Alfred Newton, Professor of Zoology, and his Sunday evenings at Magdalene. There was nearly always someone present of world-wide fame, and many of those who came so regularly became well-known men in after life. Newton had one peculiarity. He hated anyone to smoke anything except a pipe, or to light it with aught else than a cedar spill. On the centre table was a stone jar filled with an excellent brand of 'shag,' and on the mantelpiece were two more containing these cedar spills. If anyone by chance pulled out a box of matches, the old gentleman would hurriedly limp across the room—one of his legs was a little shorter than the other—take a spill, and, lighting it at the fire, solemnly hand it to the delinquent.

In 1881 new Statutes came into force removing celibacy from the list of qualifications for retaining a 'fellowship,' with the natural result that 1882 was in very truth a year of brides. Though most of the old Fellows—and some were very old—remained bachelors to the end of their days, a large proportion of the younger lot took unto themselves wives, so that it was not only in 'May Week' that skirts and bonnets, other than those of 'bedders,' were to be seen in the courts.

The monastic atmosphere which had hung over the town for six centuries had already been scattered by the invasion of the 'bright girl graduate with her golden hair' a few years earlier. The young ladies from Girton drove into Cambridge in wagonettes, while their sisters from Newnham walked. Both parties were decorously and effectively chaperoned by stern-looking females in black, who sat on a chair near the door of the lecture-room. Outside there

was no mingling of the sexes at all. It was possible occasionally to obtain special permission to visit a sister or near relation, but even then certain formalities had to be observed, and the presence of a duenna, which was invariably insisted on, tended to cramp the visitor's style.

There was very little in the conversation of the eighties—certainly not in the presence of ladies—of the nature referred to some time ago in the *Granta* and the *Cherwell* ; nor would it have been true to say that ‘ the proverbial bargee speaks pulpit prose in comparison with the casual conversation of modern undergraduates.’ A clever *double-entendre* would then, as always, raise a laugh, but Rabelaisian wit was not encouraged, while to mention any woman's name lightly in company was something ‘ not done.’ No doubt there has ever been a tendency on the part of older people to compare the present unfavourably with the past—*autres temps, autres mœurs*—but is one necessarily ‘ a prude ’ if one feels that perhaps the generation of to-day has lost something of its delicacy :

The ladies were already proving that they could hold their own in the examination-hall. Miss Ramsay of Girton had headed the Classical Tripos of her year, while Miss Fawcett of Newnham, not to be outdone, was listed ‘ above the Senior Wrangler ’ ! The former married the Master of Trinity, and their son, who later was also a distinguished member of the university, was irreverently referred to as ‘ Little Herodotus.’

Probably the women on the whole worked harder than the men. Public opinion was still much against higher education for girls, who—particularly those of the upper classes—were taught by governesses, or went to schools of the ‘ finishing ’ type. They did not go to college to have a good time. They were pioneers in the Women's Move-

ment. They had to justify themselves, and they took their responsibilities very seriously.

Rowing, of course, held the premier position in the field of Sport, and a place in 'the boat' the greatest honour to which one could aspire. There were only two 'Divisions,' either in the 'Lents' or the 'Mays'—why the 'Mays,' when they are always rowed in June? One always felt a great respect for rowing men—at least I did—since most had a long way to run to the river and back. Unless one joined a few others in a hansom, there was no other means of transport. † One of the Presidents in my day was the famous S. D. Muttletbury. He was a 'character,' and there were many stories about him—most of them in all probability apocryphal. One bitter day during the 'lents' I was running along the tow-path urging my college boat, between gasps, to further efforts, when I heard a shout behind me, 'D——n you, sir! Get out of the way!' I turned to find 'Muttie,' who was acting as umpire, and his old white horse, just on top of me. I hurled myself down the bank and almost into the river. Nevertheless, as I hurried back to my rooms that evening, I was as proud as Punch, for had I not been sworn at by the President of the C.U.B.C. ! On another occasion I was walking along St. Andrew's Street, when I saw Gardiner of Emmanuel and a friend accompanied by a little dog. The last, as all dogs will, went across the road to inspect a lamp-post, and at that moment his master opened the door of his lodgings, and disappeared within with his companion. The little fellow ran up and down searching everywhere. Seizing him in my arms—luckily he didn't bite—I carried him to the door and knocked. Gardiner himself opened it, and I had the felicity of being thanked by the Varsity 'stroke.' What heroes we regarded these 'blues' when we were young! Nearly forty years later

I was asked to join a supper-table at a dance in Kenya, and was astonished to find that my neighbour on my left was a nephew of the old 'stroke,' while the President's son was just opposite me !

It was somewhere about this time that the *Granta* made its first appearance. There had been a falling-off in Cambridge rowing, and the Oxford President, in supporting some request from the sister university, urged as a reason that 'the latter were 'a poorer lot than usual.' Great was the wrath of the average undergraduate, and a very clever set of verses under the above title—written, if my memory serves me, by the late R. C. Lehmann—came out in the following number. It referred, I think, to a general meeting which was held. At this distance of time I can only hazily recollect one verse, which ran somewhat as follows :

*' Came the pious youths of Selwyn, and the burly men of Clare,
Of Sidney, Queens', and Jesus who had heard of the affair,
While the baby boys of Cavendish came rolling in their prams,
With a poorer lot than usual of lollipops and jams.'*

There was quite an excitement over the incident, partly wrathful, partly amused. However, things were smoothed over handsomely by Oxford, and, so far as I remember, we were equally handsomely beaten. Cavendish was a college which had been founded with the idea of reducing the expenses of a university course, by permitting its members to come up at an earlier age, and at considerably lower fees. It was greatly handicapped by its distance from the other colleges, and a few years later it was closed, and its buildings taken over as a Training College.

It was during the Lent Races of 1887 or 1888 that a ghastly accident occurred, which was followed by the order that every boat should carry a ball on the prow. Clare had just made a bump, and victor and vanquished were drawing into

the bank. Immediately behind was a Hall crew, closely pursued in its turn. Quite how it happened was never certain. Probably the Hall cox turned his head for a moment to see his position, and the sun, which was now low in the west, blinded him. Anyway, he did not see what was in front, and before he realised his danger he had rammed the Clare boat. The sharp iron prow pierced poor Campbell's heart, and he was killed instantly. A tragic ending to that term's racing.

A similar accident, mercifully without such a terrible sequel, occurred two or three years later. On this occasion Corpus had a wonderful crew, captained by Fyson, the 'blue.' It was very fast and beautifully together, and, had it been Head of the River, would probably have remained there. As it was, it was very low down in the First Division, and was certain of making four bumps. Just behind was Lady Margaret II—a poor lot—and behind them again First Trinity III, which was fast for its place. The gun went, and at the same moment there went up a cry of mingled rage and terror. The Corpus cox, as he let go the chain handle, somehow or other dropped it into the stern, with the result that the eight was anchored, and began to turn into the bank. Had that been all, Corpus would merely have lost a place—quite bad enough!—but unfortunately Trinity was coming up with a rush, and the Lady Margaret cox lost his head. Instead of letting his eight row past the anchored galleon and claiming the bump, he made straight for the unfortunate crew. It was an awful moment. With their feet under the stretcher-straps they had no chance whatever of getting out of the way. In an instant the bow of Lady Margaret tore through the Corpus stern grazing the cox, passed under stroke's armpit, and on past seven and six before it stopped. The brand-new shell, which

Corpus had specially purchased for their triumphant rise, split into two perfect halves like a pod, and the peas, in the shape of eight raging and one miserable man, waded to the shore. How no one was even injured still remains a mystery.

Rugger, in the case of the Varsity matches, was played on the Corpus ground, and Soccer on Parker's Piece. Hockey was not formally recognised, and did not even reach the rank of a 'half-blue' until much later. There was a prejudice against it as likely to interfere with football, and perhaps still more with the boats. Picking up an old *Hazell's Annual* recently I saw that as late as 1905 there were no less than eight colleges each with fewer than a hundred undergraduates—Magdalene had only thirty-six—and it was not always possible to get together representative teams. Marlborough and Rossall were the only two important schools that played hockey regularly, and they provided most of the really good players in the university. Not a few of the members of the various college elevens used sticks cut from the hedge, while matches were confined almost entirely to the Lent term.

Although it was perfectly permissible to wear pads and gloves at cricket, nothing in the shape of protectors was allowed in either football or hockey as savouring of professionalism. The first player I ever saw wearing ear-caps was the late 'Sammy' Woods in the 'Freshers' match in '88. His example was soon followed, with the result that torn ears and poisoned head-wounds rapidly diminished.

The Rugby game was not so fast then as it is now. There was one back, three three-quarters (later four were tried), and two halves. These were chosen naturally for speed, but the nine forwards had to show plenty of avoirdupois, and the capacity for shoving and overrunning the opponents. 'Scrums,' and lengthy ones, were constant, while 'heeling-

out' as a science had not yet come in. The 'pack'—well wedged together, the ball gripped between the feet of the man in the middle of the front row—would try to rush the opposing lot off their balance and break through. McDonnell, an Irish International, came up to Pembroke, and was given his 'blue' as a forward in his first year. He was light and extremely quick, and very adroit in getting the ball from the scrum, when away he would go twisting and dodging until he could get it out to a three-quarter. His tactics, however, were regarded as unorthodox, and after his first season he was dropped. These lengthy scrums gave a certain amount of rest to the outsides, as also did the 'maul.' A man would rush over the line, but, before he could touch down, one of the defenders would seize him, and a sort of wrestling match would ensue, both teams looking on, until the ball was grounded, and the necessary decision given by the umpire.

Soccer was played by the smaller colleges only during the Lent term, and this handicapped them when they happened to have a promising player, as he had comparatively little chance of attracting notice. The Varsity team usually contained a preponderance of men from Charterhouse, Malvern, and Repton, with a sprinkling from Aldenham, Shrewsbury and one or two other establishments. There was a good deal of snobbery in those days in the awarding of 'blues.' It is only natural that a young fellow coming up with a high reputation, and joining a particularly athletic college, should have a bit of a pull. But fifty years ago the great majority of undergraduates came from the public schools, and those who could not boast of a connection with one of them were at a distinct disadvantage. It was the same with men from the smaller colleges. It would be quite easy, even at this distance of time, to give half a dozen names,

who, had they come from one of the more fashionable institutions, or from one of the larger colleges, would have been almost certainly selected. To judge from the present lists there is far less of this snobbishness, and a very good thing.

Lawn tennis, though it only emerged from the original 'sphairostick' about 1875, was almost as popular then as it is now. Every college had its courts, while 'Paradise' was always crowded. Golf, on the other hand, if played at all, was confined to a very few. Seeing that a brilliant scarlet coat was practically *de rigueur* in those days—most courses were on public commons, and it was necessary to warn pedestrians—had there been many enthusiasts it would have been difficult to have overlooked them. Lacrosse, fine game that it is, never took on, probably on account of the claims of other sports. A certain number, however, belonged to the Cambridge University Lacrosse Club, and played matches with the Leys School, and a few outside clubs. Athletics and cross-country running occupied many throughout the October and the Lent terms. The rule that selection to represent the University was nearly always decided by the actual performances of the competitors was an excellent one, and reduced favouritism to a minimum.

An institution which had a somewhat uphill struggle against prejudice was the Cambridge University Volunteers, usually contemptuously referred to as the 'Bugshooters.' Few realise the invaluable work done by these enthusiasts at both universities. In later years, as the O.T.C., their members were to prove their worth in the Great War. A writer describing Cambridge in the eighties says :

'Cattle grazed and ruminated over Herschel Road, and by the banks of the Binn Brook. The University Volunteers careered unrestricted, with an occasional interlude by the

Polo Club, over a vast prairie now bisected by Cranmer Road, and Selwyn Gardens were literally what their present name denotes.'

The uniform of those days was singularly uncomfortable. It was grey-blue in colour, giving the appearance of having been made out of grandfather's discarded dressing-gown. The Snider had been replaced by the Martini-Henry, which, if it didn't kick quite as much as its predecessor, was prone to leave the careless marksman with a bruised and swollen cheek. The Colonel was A. P. Humphry, Senior Esquire Bedell, who was a magnificent shot, especially at long ranges, and had won the Queen's Prize in 1871 at the age of twenty-one.

Some of the cricket teams of those years were rather more than the average, but there must be many who remember one lot coming badly to grief at the hands of 'W. G.' Cambridge had not been doing badly, and were perhaps a little too sure of themselves. Anyhow, the 'Old Man' put himself on to bowl, and disposed of one batsman after another. One can still hear Grace's chuckle following each disconsolate cricketer to the pavilion.

During the summer the bathing-place of the University Swimming Club was crowded, especially on Sunday mornings after chapel. One of the regular frequenters was Oscar Browning, Fellow of King's, and a well-known character. One very hot day there were a number of us present, including 'O. B.' It was the latter's invariable custom, after coming out of the water, to wrap an enormous towel round himself, and, slipping off his bathing-drawers, to climb to the top diving-board and sit in the sun. On this occasion, just as he reached the summit, he had the misfortune to step on his towel and give it a sudden tug. Before he could clutch it, it fell, and there he stood like a rather stout piece of Greek

statuary exposed to the gaze of a ribald crowd of undergraduates, while two of his favourite pupils seized the towel, and amidst the cheers of the audience once more restored the unfortunate man to a more respectable condition.

The club used to select a team to swim against Oxford, and not unnaturally was anxious that its representatives should be permitted to wear a 'half-blue.' The story goes that a deputation went to call on Muttlebury, whose support, as President of the C.U.B.C., they were anxious to obtain. The knock on the door being answered, they entered the room and explained the object of their visit. Muttlebury turned to the spokesman of the party and said, 'Very well. Have your men ready at eight to-morrow morning, and I will see what you can do. Good evening, gentlemen !' Punctually next day at 8 a.m. Muttlebury was at the rendezvous, where a number of men suitably garbed were awaiting him. In a few seconds the President, having divested himself of his garments, asked the Captain what was the first distance, and was told that it was the 100 yards. The selected representatives took up their stations, and at the word 'go' leapt into the water accompanied by Muttlebury himself, who won the race easily. Two other events followed with the same result. Then came high-diving, and once again Muttlebury was first. Without saying a word the great man went straight back to the dressing-room, got into his clothes and strode off.

I never heard the sequel, but, as a 'half-blue' was granted not long afterwards, one must suppose that the President was more sympathetic than he appeared.

Fifty years ago there were no cinemas, nor wireless. Even the gramophone was as yet undreamed of. But there were, of course, the 'Penny Pops,' which the

musical societies of the various colleges took it in turns to give at the Corn Exchange. Theatrical companies used to come up constantly. One can still hear Lottie Collins singing her 'Tararaboomdeay,' and watch that most charming of actresses, Maud Millett, in the name part of 'Sweet Lavender.' Her photograph was to be found on the mantelpiece of every self-respecting undergraduate. Her early marriage deprived the Stage of one who would have risen to the highest rank in her profession, while few realised the fineness of her character, nor how much she did to help those in need.

But, if there was not the variety of amusement that exists to-day, there was any amount of social life. In the afternoons, particularly during the winter and early spring, we would drop in upon one another for tea—there were neither restaurants nor cafés in the town—while, after Hall, we drifted along for coffee or cocoa, and, provided one was not 'reading' for some exam., stayed on for music or nap—more rarely whist. Cigarettes were not so universal as now, and they were largely rolled by the smoker himself, but most of us preferred pipes. There was a craze just then for colouring meerschaums. The great thing was to get an absolutely even line about two-thirds up the bowl. On a knock being heard, a general shout would go up urging the intruder to open the door very carefully, while our hands went round our pipes to keep off any possible draught which might affect the regularity of the line, so that we must have looked as though we were taking part in some incantation scene.

'Colours' were worn somewhat indiscriminately. A tennis blazer and a cricket tie, combined with an 'old school' scarf or sweater, was no uncommon combination. Towards the end of the Boer War there was a tendency to

wear a panama with a black ribbon, but this gradually died out and the old fashion came back. Nowadays the craze for 'colours' seems greater than ever, but with this difference—that, whereas formerly only those wore them who were entitled to do so, the present-day youth seems most catholic in his choice, and is no respecter of either persons or institutions.

No college fifty years ago had either baths or electric light. On returning from the river or football-field, your gyp dragged a tin tray from under your bed, and poured in a can of hot water. As the floor was rarely even, this gave you a depth of about half an inch on one side, and left you perfectly dry on the other.

Peterhouse was the first institution to enjoy electric light, which was a gift, I believe, of the famous physicist and inventor, Lord Kelvin, a former member of the college.

Old photographs show how fashions have changed. Almost everyone wore a moustache—a few still sported whiskers. A well-known sight on the river was a gentleman who went by the name of the 'Emmanuel Pink'un,' whose flaming hirsute appendages of the 'Dundreary' type clashed badly with his boating blazer. Collars were starched and upright—often with turned-down points. Knickerbockers were popular with cyclists and on the village tennis-court—anyone will realise this who looks over an old volume of *Punch* and studies Du Maurier's drawings—but at the Varsity everybody wore trousers. Flannels were quite as voluminous as 'Oxford bags,' but were decidedly better cut. The correct shape allowed the crease to fall just behind the tip of the shoe—shoes tended to be pointed—while the material was somewhat gaudily striped.

There was a certain amount of 'ragging' in some colleges, but it was usually confined to bump suppers and similar

occasions. The fifth of November generally produced the usual crop of black eyes and swollen noses, but, unless you were thirsting for a scrap, and were prepared to risk paying a heavy fine into the university chest, it was wiser on Guy Fawkes night to remain in college. Theatrical audiences were always likely to be hilarious, especially if some well-known 'favourite' was appearing, yet I never remember any serious ill-feeling. Whatever our misdemeanours, if any damage was done, we were always prepared to pay for it, and reparation, as a rule, was on the generous side.

Some time after I went down there occurred the famous 'Spinning-House Scandal.' The two older universities have, or had, considerable disciplinary powers, not merely over its members, but over the townsfolk as well, which throughout the centuries has always caused a certain amount of jealousy and friction.

The Spinning-House was a building not far from Downing belonging to the University, and used by the proctors as a kind of 'house of correction' for ladies suspected of leading an irregular life. The case arose from the apprehension of a certain person known as 'Daisy.' Whether she had been unfairly treated or otherwise was not so much the point as that the Civic authorities had seized upon the opportunity to raise the whole question of the University's rights. Whatever good cause there may have been in early days for granting these powers, they had mostly become anachronisms. At this distance of time it is difficult to recollect the result of the trial, but I believe that the Spinning-House, if it still exists, has been put to other uses, while the University has been shorn, probably without much regret, of some of its ancient privileges. That the proctors did sometimes make bad mistakes has to be acknowledged, but theirs was a very difficult task. There is a story that during one May

Week two young ladies were observed walking along King's Parade escorted by a couple of undergraduates. In spite of their united protests that they were relations—which turned out to be the truth—they were forthwith conducted to the Spinning-House. It happened that the girls were actually connected with a very senior dignitary of the University, and, a message having been conveyed to him, that gentleman's carriage and pair duly arrived, and drove them back to respectability under the wing of their chaperon.

When the War had ended and the halls and lecture-rooms had begun to fill once more, it was said that Cambridge, as we had known her, was finished, and that the old traditions and customs would never be revived. But a certain number of her sons who had survived the trenches, the gas, the gun, the submarine returned and it is to them that these traditions, which had their roots buried in the distant past, were preserved. To them we owe a debt which can never be repaid.

But, if undergraduate life is much the same as it has always been, there have been many material additions and alterations in the half-century that has passed. The hansom has been replaced by the taxi, the 'penny-pop' by the cinema; the restaurant and the tea-shop have come to stay; while the disappearance of the moustache gives us old-timers a feeling that our successors are a younger lot than they were in our day.

As for the new buildings, many commemorate those who gave their lives in the terrible four years. Some are in keeping with the older architecture, and to those whose memory lingers in the past they appeal, but one does not feel so sure when one gazes upon the University Library.

One presumes the swans—or their descendants—are still at

Emmanuel. (Do the 'young gentlemen' still on occasion introduce them into the Dean's bed?) The newly fledged graduate from Caius still passes through the Gate of Honour. Doubtless the fountain in Trinity Great Court continues to justify its existence as a bath for the obstreperous; and budding Miltons recline under the mulberry-tree in Christ's.

Nothing can spoil the beauty of the Backs. The motor-car may tear past between 'Cats' and Corpus, the aeroplane may soar over King's Chapel, but the nightingale will always sing through the summer night in the Fellows' gardens, and make their nests in the clinging ivy. With all her charm, Oxford has nothing which quite compares with them. Whether it be in the early spring, when the rooks are repairing their homes in the lofty elms, or in the summer, when these same elms are covered in their 'garland of green,' or in the autumn in their dress of russet, or yet once more when winter has stripped them bare, and the Snow Queen in her modesty has covered their nakedness with a mantle of white, the Backs are a dream of loveliness. And the Cam still slowly winds along her reedy bed, as she has done ever since Hugh de Balsham, Bishop of Ely, established one fine day in the year of Our Lord 1281 his 'studious schollars living according to the rule of the schollars of Oxford called Merton' in those early buildings dedicated to St. Peter of the Keys, which have expanded, as the centuries have passed, into our great unchanged and unchanging university.

THE FUGITIVE.

*The ghost of a melody, walking lone
on a wind-blown slope
of the dawn.*

*A singer heard it : he caught its note
in his golden throat,
where it sobbed for a breath and was gone.*

*A poet heard it, his ears astrain
for the faint refrain
of a song :*

*He built it a prison-house of rhyme,
he drilled its time,
but its dancing feet
fled on.*

*A harpist heard it : he caged its wings
behind silver strings,
but it slipped through the bars and was gone.*

*For none could trap its elusive, faint,
far-away complaint,
its snatch of unearthly song,*

*This ghost of a melody, walking alone
on a wind-blown slope
of the dawn.*

A. V. STUART.

PROVENÇAL WINDS AND WEATHER.

BY HENRY HARDINGE.

It is late March, the season when Spring in Provence holds the loveliest of her courts, although she is still on tiptoe, eager but not quite sure of the permanency of her reign. She advances smilingly, but lifts her skirt ready for a temporary flight if the *mistral* should come down suddenly shouting the battle-cry of old Winter who yet lingers on the hills and now and then lashes back with a rear-guard skirmish.

Under it all, however, is an exultant sense that his power is broken. The almond trees began to brave him weeks ago with a few scattered blossoms, forerunners of the masses of bloom which now look like rosy clouds resting here and there on the hillsides, just beginning to show the golden-green tinge of the following leaves. The earlier song-birds are in full voice, and small blue butterflies and larger white ones flutter about the flower-beds in which the bees are loudly busy. Later in the day when the declining sun gives the signal, small green tree-frogs will open their trilling chorus in the shrubbery of the garden.

But Spring in Provence would not be truly Provençale if she hastened. She orders her ways by the accepted code which regulates conduct, individual and collective, everywhere in this ancient realm of love and song—*ça ne presse pas* ; there's no hurry. It is as characteristic as the *Mañana* of the Mexican, and means about the same thing. Never do anything until you absolutely have to. And she does not have to. There are ten good months for the awakening, the putting forth, the flourishing, the fruition and the linger-

ing to sleep again. She can take at least three months for her part before beginning in the North where the whole programme must be played through in a scant three weeks.

The migrants, with their large knowledge of the latitudes and the influences and effects of climate, wait to see her government more firmly established before extending their recognition. Not before early April will the scouting bands of the swallows come. At that season you must not watch the sky throughout the week ; wait until Sunday and then look diligently so that you may see the first one on that day and thereby win good luck. In another fortnight after that you may hear the cuckoo, always, it seems, far off, and in a month the nightingale will begin to sing in half-voice.

Those plants of the waste lands and the gardens which are more willing to endure the vicissitudes of a still turbulent régime, which were swifter in their first gesture of response, seem to be overtaken by a mood of hesitation. One can hardly note progress from day to day, even from week to week. Not until June brings its warm nights is there real exuberance, and then it seems to pass all too quickly into the heat of summer with the incessant, dry, vibrating chant of the cicadas. With that comes the drouth, the months which in their total effect class the region as semi-arid.

It is said that (like studied ugliness in painting and sculpture, and in writing) the phenomenon is modern ; that in the time of the Romans the valleys grew so luxuriantly as to make it difficult to keep the roads open, and the *mistral* did not blow ; that deforestation has worked the change. Be that as it may, this land of hills and valleys, upon which the eye of the Lord seems to rest lovingly from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, is no longer watered by the rain from heaven between the months of May and

October, and everything that cannot adapt itself to the conditions must be maintained by irrigation.

This is the phase of the climate which has given rise to the tradition of 'perpetual sunshine,' a tradition fostered by hotel-keepers and tradesmen catering to visitors and by sundry local organisations and administrations hoping to attract more guests who would come to bask, and remain, for a while at least, to pay sojourn taxes and luxury taxes and thus help to pay for sewers and Vespasiennes. They caught at the slogan (to use a word dear to Rotarians everywhere), never suspecting that among hardy Nordics the slogan—if you will pardon a mixing of metaphors—might prove a boomerang. One good old lady whose religion is as austere as her skies, when she heard that I was really getting a little place in St. Gaston, wrote me a most serious warning against the degradation of physical and above all of moral fibre induced by life amidst 'too perpetual sunshine.' She was only partly comforted when I assured her that it was not really too perpetual; perhaps more than slightly perpetual, but [at most only at certain times rather perpetual.

There is more of it, of course, than there is in England, even in the Isle of Wight, but not more than in a very large part of the United States. The difference is in character rather than in quantity. There is a sort of magical quality in the skies of the Littoral with their stupendous cloud effects, their splendid vapour masses rolling up from the Mediterranean, their reverberation of colour reflected from the hills and the sea. The sunshine seems to saturate instead of merely traversing the atmosphere. It makes of it a subtly tinted, often indeed a richly tinted, luminous solution that dissolves the edges of everything seen through it. The distance is almost opalescent, the sky a little thickened against

the crest of the hills, the edge of the hills softened to meet the sky so that they seem half-fused the one into the other.

The effect heightens as summer advances and the rising heat draws the moisture from the earth, and (one is tempted to say) with it colour which remains suspended in the air. Values in the foreground grow duller while those of the farther planes are enriched. But now in March all are more limpid, and the near by is splashed and checkered with vivid young green, with the pale and deep rose of fruit blossoms, with scarlet carpets of wild tulips in the vineyards, mauve borders of anemones along the ditches, lilac and purple of the Mediterranean heath and rosemary on the hills, gleams of golden gorse in the waste lands everywhere.

With exception of the orchard trees, however, almost all these plants are native sons and daughters, accustomed to live dangerously, to seize the first chance to push into life and to take the risks that all pioneers and adventurers must run. It is only the wild earth or the narrow borders and dikes untouchable by the cultivator that are yet verdant. The acres under servitude, under human protection to be repaid by tribute, are most of them still bare and their future population unborn. A few marauders have broken through and are gorging hastily before punishment can reach them. The wild tulip, the sun's eye as the French call it because of its violet centre in the scarlet circle of the petals, is most conspicuous. It seems to be actually quivering with haste to live and love and bear before the ploughshare casts it out. But even the tulip does not venture nearer in than the vineyards. You will not find it in your vegetable or flower beds. They will be green enough with weeds later on, worse luck ! but hardly as yet.

The Père Dallibert (as my old Provençal gardener is always called), like his garden, is marking time, preparing

ground for the seedings soon to follow, protecting precocious growth from dangers of late frosts, beginning his campaign against the ravages of birds, snails, ants, multipeps, mole-cricketts. The vineyards and orchards must be ploughed ; it is the last month for setting slips or planting young trees, and if you want a good melon-bed, his proverbs say, you must make it at St. Joseph's day, the 25th. On the whole, however, the weather is less anxiously watched than it will be during the next two months. 'March rains bring no gains,' says another proverb ; they are too early ; but as to April, the saw runs that while it has only thirty days 'if on thirty-one rain fall, it will do no harm at all.' 'April cold gives wine and bread ; cold in May will leave them dead.'

The old man's concept of the agencies at work is highly personalised. The principal power back of it all, as he sees it, is of course the sun, but the sun is a steady old fellow who goes his rounds systematically, leaving the play of affairs on the earth largely to the moon, who is almost as notional as he is stolid. That is, she has a great many whims which you must know and respect if you want to keep out of trouble. The lower agencies, rain, drouth, heat, cold, the winds, to Dallibert are entities. The winds especially are creatures with names. They exist definitely and continuously whether or not they happen to be blowing at the moment, just as you exist even if you are in London or New York instead of here with us. He never speaks nor thinks of them by compass direction ; indeed, the Provençal peasant does not orient anything by the compass. If you talk to him about the south-east or the nor'west he looks puzzled and says 'Ma foi !'

There are four quarters to the earth and the sky. The first is the *midi*, the direction of the sun at noon, the south ; it is

most often spoken of because exposure on that side means warmth and light in the house and sunshine in the fields and gardens. Then there is the *levant*, the rising, where the sun comes up, and the *couchant*, the going-to-bed, where he sets. Lastly there is the sinister, the hostile, the cold northern quarter, the *mistral*. It takes its name from the shrieking, plunging north-westerly gale that roars down the valley of the Rhone below Valence, out over the Gulf of the Lion and eastward along the coast, striking here and there with diminishing force even to Menton. When it does, the smoke and fire blow down the chimney and out into the room, work out of doors almost stops, and in some regions (near Avignon, for example) railway trains are delayed. There the plantations are crossed by windbreaks of stiff cypresses or interwoven canes ten yards apart. As the *mistral* passes out to sea it catches the crests in localised cyclonic whirls of spindrift that go careering off like the bases of small waterspouts.

The course of the *mistral* seems erratic because we do not know the laws it obeys and do not see the aerial obstacles it leaps to come down beyond, the invisible air-cushions against which it cannons or between which it crowds desperately. If you want to establish yourself anywhere in its domain (the valley of the Rhone or of the lower Durance, and eastward at least to Nice), whether for a picnic luncheon or for life, there is only one safe rule. Watch the *mistral* in action and choose a spot where it does not strike. I have sat down in an open plateau on the top of the Baou Calendal, reached after a fierce struggle through the gale, and spread out my newspaper in a calm undisturbed except by trifling puffs, while a hundred yards away the trees, bent half-way over, tugged at their roots in the effort to give up, lie down, and have done with it.

St. Gaston, behind high hill ramparts on the landward side, does not have to battle strenuously with the *mistral*, but it does have to face the complementary wind, the *labé* (or *labech*), an on-shore gale from the south-west. When it blows hard the green water comes over the jetty and the white water goes over the lantern of the lighthouse. The fishermen, who carry umbrellas when it looks like rain, do not go out at all. Once or twice a year we have a day of *sirocco*, the hot south wind from Africa which dries up growing things like a blast from a furnace. In winter and spring the prevailing wing is the *largade*, south-easterly, more often called simply the 'wind of the sea' or the 'wind of the rain,' for it is often, though by no means always, wet. When it backs a little farther it is the *levant*, a moderate easterly blow or a dry north-easter.

Dallibert thinks of the winds as semi-independent powers, but he believes there are certain fixed inter-relations. A misty moon will bring either wind or rain. Not merely predict it, mind you—attract it. A very hot sun will provoke a storm. A light rain will 'draw' a strong *mistral*, and a heavy rain will draw only a light *mistral*. When, as very often happens, a *mistral* comes down when there has been no rain at all—*ma foi*, there has been a rain somewhere near that has drawn it. If it begins in the night it will not last long, but if it comes up with the sun it will last several days. You are in for a spell of it.

The old man makes his weather forecasts by a sort of general sense, but he watches continually for a number of signs: the aspects of the sun, the moon and the stars, the clouds, the characteristics of raindrops or snowflakes, of the thunder or the rainbow. He finds portents in the respiration of the wind, in odours, in the condition of the salt in the kitchen, of the surfaces of wood, iron or marble,

in the sound made by the ploughshare in the earth and the feel of the spade and the hoe as they turn the soil, in the fall of the soot in the chimney and the appearance of the candle-flame, or the action of the wick as it burns.

All the creatures are his counsellors. The bat flying wide and high, crows calling in the morning, the screech-owl meowing in the rain, gnats engrossed in dancing in a thick swarm at sunset—these are signs of good weather just ahead. Warnings of rain and storm are more numerous. The peacock crying, pigeons coming late into the cote at night, bees lingering near the hive or returning quickly only half-laden, the cock crowing at evening dusk or any unseasonable hour, hens ruffling much in the dust, spiders wandering about and changing their lairs, sparrows making a great noise of chirping and perching on the roof-tiles, flies biting and sticking, swallows flying close to the ground, frogs croaking louder than their wont, toads coming quite out of their holes at twilight, worms emerging from their burrows, cattle and especially sheep eating extra-greedily . . .

Wholly unscientific. To which he would reply by another folk-saying : ‘ L’esperienti passo scienci. Vaqui ço qu’èi.’ ‘ Experience beats science, and there’s what it is !’

Southern Provence.

POOR MISS FRY.

BY M. DE B. DALY.

WHEN Miss Susan Fry came to Sant'Anna¹ everybody spoke of her as 'poor little Miss Fry.' She was so small, so gentle, and so obviously hard up that there seemed no other way of mentioning her. She had drifted into the 'Pension Scarelli,' as Englishwomen do drift into Continental boarding-houses, in search of cheap living and a good climate. The living before long became no cheaper than anywhere else, and even the weather, if one listened to the wiseacres, was consistently worse than ever before. Miss Fry, however, remained at the *pension*, partly because the Scarelli family was good to her and partly because she had not the initiative to go anywhere else. Occasionally she gave lessons in English to Italian shopkeepers, who paid badly, but since she taught badly the arrangement was fair enough. Sometimes she added to her income by looking after the very young or very old, but as her iron-grey hair became white, her skin wrinkled and her blue eyes faded, such employment was rare. On several occasions she told the Signora that she intended to leave and take a room in the village. The Signora always burst into tears and begged to be told why the Signorina was dissatisfied. Miss Fry indignantly denied the accusation, but explained that such queer things happened to money nowadays that it was always less than it really was. She could not afford the luxury of 'Pension Scarelli,' and so, though it made her very

¹ 'Interlude at Sant Anna' appeared in CORNHILL, October, 1936.

unhappy to leave the Signora, and the children, and Signor Carlo . . . and Teresa . . . and Paolina . . . then she too wept a little.

In the end the Signora always reduced her low charges still further, and Miss Fry stayed. The Signora's motives, like those of other people, were mixed. She had the kindest of hearts, especially for the old and ill ; a *stomaco delicato* was a sure passport to her favour, and as she diagnosed poor little Miss Fry's asthma in this rather peculiar fashion, it served as an excuse for many small kindnesses. She did not, however, forget that Miss Fry occupied a tiny north room which would otherwise often be empty, or that she was always ready to write or translate an English letter. Above all, the Signora, like most Italian hotel-keepers, considered an English clientèle a mark of respectability. She liked to have a permanent English guest to welcome new-comers and post them in the doings of the English colony.

The phenomena of exchange stimulated Miss Fry's natural gift for economy, and she became a past mistress in the cheeseparings of her kind. She washed handkerchiefs in her basin, dried them across the window, and ironed them with an electric iron surreptitiously attached to the lamp ; she had breakfast in her room—a Continental habit she detested—in order to save a drop of milk and half a roll for her tea. She bargained over small purchases with a vigour which seemed to belie her gentleness, but which the Italians (though they safeguarded themselves by increasing their prices before they reduced them) respected ; they saw she understood the game.

Miss Fry was a regular Churchwoman and a keen, though platonic, supporter of local charities. The chaplain and other kindly disposed people always included her in the

mild activities of the place. By the time she had lived twenty years in Sant'Anna she was recognised as an integral part of the British community, but also by that time poor little Miss Fry was generally called 'poor old Miss Fry.'

II.

Carola Desmond, tennis racquet in hand, dashed upstairs and knocked at poor old Miss Fry's door.

There was a pause, while Carola stood tapping her racquet impatiently on her foot. When she was given permission to enter she found Miss Fry, whose archaic sense of the seemly had made her cram the undergarment she had been mending behind a cushion, busily knitting a jumper.

'Oh, Miss Fry, I've just been given another ticket for the Variety Entertainment on Thursday evening,' she cried, 'and you simply *must* come!'

Miss Fry's face lighted with childlike pleasure.

'Now that really *is* delightful! I wanted to go, and thought of taking a ticket, especially as it's for the blind, but I decided that it would not be fair to my nephew to indulge myself.'

'Now, Miss Fry dear, that's really absurd! I'm sure your nephew would rather you had a whole evening's amusement now, than that he had eighteenpence after you are dead, which won't be for years and years and years!'

'No doubt he would say the same, my dear, but that is not the way to look at it. He must, of course, have. All I can leave him. It will not be much, but it would be very remiss of me to indulge myself. If you once begin being selfish it is so hard to leave off. Like coffee after dinner. That ticket might have been the thin end of the wedge.'

Carola seated herself on the bed, remarking:

'I wish you'd drive the wedge in good and deep, Miss

Fry dear. Nowadays the younger generation doesn't expect to be supported by the older.'

'My nephew supports himself,' Miss Fry replied, a little stiffly. 'He has never asked me for a penny, but his mother was my only sister, and therefore it is natural that he should expect something when I am gone.'

'I don't see why,' insisted Carola. 'You ought to buy an annuity and revel in the fleshpots for the rest of your life. I've a great mind to write to your nephew and tell him so.'

Fleshpots and Miss Fry sounded so incongruous that she burst out laughing.

Miss Fry, though usually tolerant of the girl's plain speaking, now seemed annoyed.

'You will do nothing of the sort, Carola,' she said with great firmness. 'I gave you my nephew's address in case—well, in case anything should happen to me. But I forbid you to use it unless I am seriously ill. Please understand that !'

This was Miss Fry's idea of being very severe, but Carola was not crushed as she should have been, and only answered carelessly :

'Righto, Miss Fry dear ! I'll not write to Mr. Julian Shattock until his legacy's in sight. Then he can come out to the Riviera and spend it in riotous living.'

She thought it too bad of Mr. Shattock to take no notice of his old aunt. Poor old Miss Fry might not be very exciting—who expects that of an aunt ?—but she was quite a dear, and a very little attention from him would have pleased her. For all the use he was he might as well have lived in Mars. The only proof that he did not do so was his annual Christmas card, with printed greetings, in a typed envelope with a halfpenny stamp and a London E.C. postmark. He never troubled to write.

Miss Fry confessed that she did not know much about her nephew. He was in an office, but she was vague about the kind of office. He had been a good baby, she was sure he was a steady young man. The Christmas cards and his photograph as a fat-faced child of three added nothing to this meagre information, and Carola thought that poor lonely old Miss Fry would be better off with no relations at all than with such a nephew.

The chaplain also in vain suggested that Miss Fry should buy an annuity, and the doctor succeeded no better.

‘You see, doctor,’ explained Miss Fry, who hated not to do what her kind friends wished, ‘my nephew might want to marry, or to buy a car, and then, think what a windfall my money would be !’

The doctor, who insisted on attending Miss Fry free of charge (on the plea that she had once had an uncle in medical practice), declared that in future he would charge her double. But instead he took her a basket of tangerines from his garden.

III.

The tickets for the Variety Entertainment were never used. On Thursday afternoon Signora Scarelli, alarmed but pleasurably important, summoned Dr. Field and Carola. The doctor, with a serious face, told Carola that she had better write to her old friend’s relatives.

Carola, unhappily remembering her jest of a few days earlier, sent a lengthy telegram to Mr. Julian Shattock. His reply, ‘*Spare no expense. Keep me informed,*’ atoned for some of his past negligence, and his second wire, giving date and time of arrival at Sant’Anna, for more.

Signora Scarelli’s satisfaction was intense. A male relative was almost as great an asset as a delicate stomach, and Miss

Fry, with pneumonia and nephew, had an importance which in good health and alone she would never have attained.

Mr. Shattock arrived, most providentially, as the guests were filing through the hall to the *salle à manger*. They could all see and even hear him, and were able to discuss him throughout dinner, which made a delightful break in the monotony of the dull little *pension*. For he was utterly unlike what anyone had expected.

If the fat-faced infant of the photograph had turned into a weedy young man in shabby clothes, no one would have been surprised. But Mr. Shattock was not young, weedy, or shabby. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man in early middle age, with extremely good clothes and expensive-looking luggage. The Signora was quite scandalised at the sum she heard the driver ask, but noted with satisfaction that it was paid without comment. She hurried forward to greet him, and in a mixture of villainous Italian-French and sketchy English told him that the doctor's last bulletin was satisfactory. As she took him upstairs the guests heard his big voice booming, 'Good ! Good ! Poor old dear ! *Merci, madame, merci !*'

Poor old Miss Fry did not provide the further sensation of a funeral. The sentimentally inclined said that she 'took a turn' from the moment her nephew arrived. Others gave the credit, according to their personal likings, to the doctor, the trained nurse, or Carola. All three battled devotedly for the frail life. Mr. Shattock begged them to spend as much money as possible, and showered fruit, flowers, and indiarubber cushions on the sick-room. He had been horrified at its shabbiness and sunless aspect, and badgered the doctor to move her into the Signora's best room. When at last this was done he gave a tea-

party at the Casino to all the Scarelli guests in honour of the event. He would have liked it to be a dinner-party, but when Carola declared that this would hurt the Signora's feelings, gave up the idea. It was just as well, for few of the guests ever went out at night, and most were on diets. The festivity might easily have provided Dr. Field with a batch of patients.

When she first saw her nephew Miss Fry had been too ill to realise how different he was from what she had expected. This dawned on her as she recovered, and she confessed ruefully that she must have forgotten the passing years. She was a little frightened of him, and sometimes looked at him in a puzzled way, as if wondering if he were an impostor.

'He seems to be *rich* !' she said one day in an awed tone to Carola. She had never known anyone rich, or at least no one who spent money as if it did not matter.

'Of course he's rich !' replied Carola. 'He's so rich, and has been rich so long, that he's forgotten what it is to be anything else. If he ever knew. Oh, lucky, lucky man !'

'He tells me he's a widower with two children,' added Miss Fry rather doubtfully, as though so extravagant a statement could not be swallowed without investigation.

'Yes. Isn't it providential ? I mean, that he's a widower,' remarked Carola.

Miss Fry looked at her in surprise, and with rather a shocked expression. She was, in fact, often shocked by the way modern girls, even Carola, spoke of their dealings with men. According to her old-fashioned ideas, there was nothing very terrible in angling for husbands, but the process should not be discussed. Carola laughed when she saw her old friend's disapproval.

‘Oh, you wicked old thing ! You don’t suppose I meant that I wanted to catch him, do you ?’

This was exactly what Miss Fry had meant, but she hastily disclaimed it, and Carola explained :

‘No, I’m not out to be your niece-in-law, Miss Fry dear. What a pity I’m not a designing young woman ! But it’s really providential that Mrs. Julian popped off a few years ago. He wants to take you back to England and give you a rattling good time. That is, let you look after his quite decent kids and his palatial house. The kids have a nurse and the house has a housekeeper, so all you’ll have to do will be to look ornamental ! Oh, Miss Fry, to think you might have had coffee after dinner all these years !’

Miss Fry shook her head.

‘Julian may not need my money now, but remember he has two children ! I must think of the future.’

Carola stamped her foot with impatience.

‘Miss Fry, you really are incorrigible !’ she exclaimed.

IV.

Julian Shattock did not quite deserve Carola Desmond’s strictures. He had not seen his aunt for nearly forty years, and had not the faintest recollection of ever having done so. His widowed mother, the only link with her, had died soon after he had been photographed in his first trouser suit, and he had been adopted by paternal relatives. The annual Christmas card was a habit retained since childhood, and his aunt’s letters did not seem to require an answer ; he had always meant to reply, but never did.

‘You might at least have told her of your marriage !’ cried Carola indignantly.

Shattock had been looking as guilty as only a kind-hearted man accused of unkindness can look, but now he clutched at a chance to defend himself.

‘But I did! I met my wife in South America, and wrote to Aunt Susan before our marriage. In Rio. She never answered. I supposed she wasn’t interested, and never wrote again. Ought to have, when the kids came, I suppose.’

‘Well, we won’t say anything more about it,’ Carola conceded magnanimously. ‘You’ll have to make up by being decent to her now. As you have been since you knew how ill she was,’ she added graciously.

Mr. Shattock asked nothing better. He had been shocked to find his aunt in what seemed to him little better than penury. He thought the ‘Pension Scarelli’ a ghastly poky hole, full of nice, kind, but rather dull and depressingly hard-up people, and suggested that, until she was able to travel to England, she should enjoy the luxury of the ‘Hotel Majestic.’ Miss Fry looked positively frightened.

‘Oh no, Julian, I couldn’t possibly! Of course it’s very kind of you, dear, but I am much happier with Signora Scarelli, and she would be dreadfully hurt! Please!’

He hastened to assure her that she need go nowhere except where she wished. After all, he pondered, Aunt Susan herself was nice, kind, and rather dull. It was natural she should be happy at ‘Pension Scarelli,’ and at least she need no longer be hard up. He stayed in Sant’Anna a month, and then, recalled by telegram after telegram, rushed back to England by air.

A few weeks later, Miss Fry, with a nurse engaged for the journey and with Carola, who was returning to work, waved a tearful farewell to the ‘Pension Scarelli.’ Huge and most inconvenient bundles of carnations were thrust

into the taxi by old Papà Scarelli, Paolina the cook, and Maddalena the washerwoman ; Signora Scarelli sobbed so loudly that the youngest Scarelli, until then cheerfully excited over the bustle of departure, did the same, only even more noisily. The English visitors, with national restraint, fluttered handkerchiefs and called good wishes.

Miss Fry had never before soared above second class on continental railway journeys, and had sometimes sunk to third. This time, with her *salon-lit*, her nurse, her dear Carola, and the well-tipped servitude of train attendants, she felt as though she were setting off on a magic carpet. In spite, however, of all the comfort that money could procure, it was a very white and tired little Miss Fry who was almost lifted out of the train at Victoria.

Julian Shattock, well groomed, hearty, efficient, porters behind him, his car waiting, was on the platform to meet them. As Miss Fry took his strong arm, she murmured to Carola :

‘ I feel as if I were Royalty ! ’

V.

Miss Fry did not like being called ‘ madam.’ Of course she knew that Julian’s super-solemn butler and super-refined housekeeper could not be expected to call her ‘ Signorina,’ but in her long-ago experience of English servants (certainly they were more often charwomen and generals than butlers and housekeepers) she had been called ‘ miss.’ She would not have minded ‘ ma’am ’ as a tribute to her years, but at Mitton Bois even the most insignificant kitchen-maid called her ‘ madam.’ It was the same in shops, at the post-office and at the bank. She was not sure whether it were a change of fashion or a sign of her impor-

tance, but she found it impossible to take a personal interest in those who called her 'madam,' and Miss Fry liked to take an interest in everybody.

Life at Harlands House was in every way different from life at 'Pension Scarelli.' It was, as Miss Fry often told herself, immeasurably superior. Not only was everything beautifully arranged, but there was none of that uncertainty which had so often irritated English visitors at the 'Scarelli.' At the same hour every morning, after a discreet knock at the door, Warrack—Miss Fry thought it almost as unpleasant to call a woman by her surname as to be called 'madam' by her—slipped into the room, placed what was called 'Madam's early cup' on a small table by her bed, noiselessly pulled up the blinds, and silently withdrew. Had Miss Fry, peeping through her closed lashes, not seen Warrack's solid form she might have supposed all to have been done by magic. At 'Pension Scarelli' no such illusion was possible. At an hour which varied according to many irrelevant causes, Teresa thumped at the door, burst into the room, banged a jug of hot water down on the washstand, and started conversation. After she had flung open the shutters, this was stimulated by the weather. If fine, she would exclaim, 'Che bellezza !' and in wind or rain would foretell disaster to the olives. Before she left the room, Miss Fry had heard her pungent comments on all the gossip that had been discussed in the kitchen the day before.

Everything at Harlands was orderly where at the *pension* it had been, if not disorderly, at least erratic ; the English servants were quiet and well trained, the Italians had been noisy and not trained at all ; at Harlands felted doors shut off every sound from the kitchen and nursery quarters, but at Sant'Anna the doors leading to domestic offices were

nearly always open, and the din of laughter and shouting, as well as culinary odours, penetrated to the whole house.

Robert and Edna Shattock were certainly not always silent and well behaved, but their noise and misdeeds were carefully kept from their great-aunt. Poor old Aunt Susan did her best to make friends. They liked her well enough, but preferred their nurse and daily governess.

Julian Shattock was a very busy man. From Monday to Saturday his aunt hardly saw him, but he was genuinely glad to have her at Harlands, and liked to discuss his children with her. He told her this was her home for the rest of her life, but found it impossible to make her understand that she could act, and spend money, without reference to him. When he opened a bank account for her and gave her a cheque book she looked bewildered, and only occasionally drew cheques for a few shillings.

The arrival of an aunt at Harlands House was a mild excitement for the neighbourhood. Mothers wondered if she could be used to secure the wealthy but meteoric Mr. Shattock for a son-in-law, garden-lovers planned to reform her garden, and everybody wondered which side she would take in a great parochial schism. It was disappointing when she proved only what might have been expected from a maiden aunt imported from a little place on the Italian Riviera. She was too shy to give match-making opportunities; knew so little of gardening that she expected Surrey, like the Riviera, to produce two or three crops of roses a year; and worst of all, though a regular attendant at the parish church, she neither demanded incense nor snorted at Anglo-Catholicism. After curiosity had been satisfied, poor old Miss Fry had few visitors or invitations. She had done little to encourage them, but found it dull when they failed.

She thought with longing of Sant'Anna. How full her days had been there ! How empty they were here ! At Sant'Anna she had 'helped' at the English Library once a week, and nearly every day had pottered in to change a book, and to chat (usually in the reading-room) to other subscribers. At Harlands books arrived regularly from *The Times* Book Club and Julian received so many papers and magazines that there was no need to go elsewhere to read them. At Sant'Anna she stopped and talked to peasants and villagers, discussing the two topics which interested them, crops and visitors. Here she felt everyone aloof and herself a stranger. She was too diffident to offer her services for parochial work, and indeed would have been of little use.

Her nephew asked her one day if she would like to ask Carola Desmond down.

'Oh, may I ?' she asked with sparkling eyes.

'May you ? How absurd ! Of course you may ! If you don't think she'll find it dull.'

'I'm sure she'd love it,' Miss Fry said with enthusiasm, and Carola came for a long week-end. Miss Fry took her driving, Julian played tennis with her, and the children showed her their house in a tree. She declared with obvious sincerity that everything was simply gorgeous, and after that came down from time to time. She dropped hats and gloves all over the place, banged doors or left them open, and brought the kitchen dog into the drawing-room. She lost her fountain-pen, and made all the servants, regardless of rank, hunt for it. Miss Fry began to lose her awe of Manders after she had seen him flat on the floor poking a stick under a chest, and Warrack became human when, with a crow of triumph, she produced the pen from behind a sofa cushion.

Miss Fry had lived in rather lonely grandeur at Harlands

House for about a year when Carola, arriving on one of her flying visits, remarked that she was shortly going to spend a few weeks with her mother at Sant' Anna. Her hostess nearly dropped the teapot in her excitement. Her eyes shone with altruistic joy.

'Oh, how lovely! I do envy you! Please go down to the *pension* as soon as possible, and write and tell me all about it! Will you take out some presents for me? I think the Signora would like . . .'

She grew very animated in discussing gifts for the Scarelli family, drew quite a large cheque, and they both enjoyed themselves greatly in making the purchases.

'I'll send you a card the minute I get there, and a letter next day!' Carola promised her.

When, however, a few days later Carola was on the platform at Victoria, she was astounded to see her old friend, followed by a porter with a suitcase and rug, peering into the carriages of the boat-train.

'Miss Fry! Aunt Susan! Where did you spring from? Where are you going?' she called to her.

Miss Fry gave a little cry of relief. Her hat was crooked, and her cheeks were flushed.

'Oh, there you are! I was terrified lest I had made a mistake! I am going to Sant'Anna with you! Isn't it lovely! I *am* so happy!'

'What a splendid idea! But, Miss Fry dear, I'm afraid we can't travel together. I am going third, and Mr. Shattock would never approve of that. I suppose you have a first-class ticket?'

Miss Fry shook her head, and looked rather mysterious. Then she said:

'No, I have two second-class tickets. Here they are!' She produced them triumphantly. 'One for you and one

for me. And I told the man to book seats right through, with first-class accommodation on the boat. Let us get in at once.'

Usually it was Carola who took the lead in their queer companionship, but now it was Miss Fry who arranged the luggage, bought papers and ordered tea. She seemed in a fever to be off, and only calmed down as the train steamed out of the station. At Calais, the perils of the deep and the *douane* safely past, she said to Carola :

'Would you mind sending a wire to Signora Scarelli, dear ? I left so suddenly that I forgot to do so.'

'Mr. Shattock won't have forgotten,' replied Carola, though she wondered that he had let his aunt travel anything but first-class, and thought he might have come to see her off. Again she found she had misjudged him, for Miss Fry calmly remarked :

'Julian doesn't know I've come.'

Carola gasped.

'Sakes alive, Aunt Susan ! Do you mean to say you've run away ?'

'No, of course not. That is, of course I'm going back. But the children are with their grandmother, and Julian is in Germany on business. I thought of you seeing the Via Dante, and the Fontana, and the Mediterranean, and the olives . . . and . . . and . . . lots of things. I simply couldn't bear it. I had to come.'

Carola patted her hand.

'All right, Miss Fry dear ! It will be splendid having you. It's a grand idea. I'm sure Mr. Shattock will be pleased. I suppose you've written to him ?'

Poor old Miss Fry looked guilty.

'Well, no. I don't want Julian to think I'm not happy at Harlands—of course I am, very happy !—so I thought

I'd only stay a few days and return before he is back from Germany. I told the servants I was going up to town, and hoped to be back in a week. It is true. It's nothing to do with them where I go in the week.'

'Well, I'm damned!' exclaimed Carola with masculine vigour. 'You *are* a wily old bird! But I'm sure Mr. Shattock would not like you to take this long journey twice in a week. You must at least wait to travel back with me. I'll write and tell him I persuaded you to come.'

'Oh, but that would not be true,' objected Miss Fry, whose Puritan conscience objected to a lie, though it did not mind a little deceit. 'Besides, I don't want to put the responsibility on you.'

'Bless you, I don't mind telling a lie, nor yet taking a spot of responsibility,' declared Carola robustly.

An enthusiastic welcome awaited Miss Fry. The Signora, Papà Scarelli and a selection of children were at the station with large bundles of carnations. The rest of the family and the staff were on the steps of the house, and she was obliged to submit to many embraces which revealed the fact that the national love of garlic still persisted. At dinner that evening Asti spumante was served to everybody, and though it is not champagne or even very like it, most of the guests, including Miss Fry, could not have told the difference.

VI.

Carola Desmond did not show Miss Fry her letter to Julian Shattock. The first result was a telegram to his aunt which only said, '*Good idea. Don't hurry. Love, Julian,*' but which soothed her rather guilty conscience. Two letters followed.

To his aunt Julian wrote :

‘Carola says the climate at Sant’Anna suits you better than any other. Why not make it your head-quarters? At the *pension*, if you like, or I would buy you a small house. Come to Harlands for the hot summer weather, and as often as you like at other times. There will always be a welcome for you. The children will miss you, but when they are a little older I will bring them out to see you at Sant’Anna. *They* shall not be allowed to forget their Aunt Susan.’

Poor old Miss Fry cried with joy, and felt she had treated Julian very badly. She began to make plans for the children’s visit.

The letter to Carola was no less a matter for thought.

‘You are a brutal young woman, but right as usual. You can’t transplant an old tree. If the dear old thing is happy in her fusty *pension* she shall stay there. Please see that she has its best. . . .’

‘Does this mean you won’t come down to Harlands any more? I should hate that. Something must be done about it. You will please lunch with me as soon as you are back, and we can discuss this matter.’

‘Ho, ho!’ thought Carola. ‘That might almost be called Premonitory symptoms, what? Now, am I a designing young woman, or am I not?’

Not only the Scarelli family and their ramifying connections welcomed poor old Miss Fry back to Sant’Anna. The British colony, pleased that the dynamic nephew who had carried her off had allowed her to return, showered her with attentions. It was soon known that, although she insisted on living at the funny little ‘Pension Scarelli,’ she might have been at the ‘Majestic’; and since human nature, even in kindly people, has its persistent weaknesses, she was now treated with deference instead of condescension. It would certainly have been absurd to speak with com-

passion of an old lady whose afternoon tea was taken up to her private sitting-room, and who had coffee served after both lunch and dinner, so she was generally mentioned as 'dear old Miss Fry.'

Carola tried in vain to wean her from economical habits. By Mr. Shattock's orders his aunt had everything the 'Pension Scarelli' could provide, but she still found ways to save money. She continued to wash handkerchiefs in her basin, and to carry off oranges from table; nothing would induce her to drive—if she could not go to church or library on foot she would not go at all. Although she took tickets for entertainments, they were never the best.

'She's happier like that,' Carola declared when she met Julian Shattock in town; 'she's saved money all her life, and can't leave off. Spending's dull by comparison.'

He shook his head in a puzzled way. Such an idea was beyond his comprehension.

'Money is made to be spent,' he said; 'but I didn't ask you here to talk about money, or even about Aunt Susan. . . . Carola . . .'

When her nephew's exultant telegram arrived Miss Fry was filled with pleasurable and rather sentimental excitement. She decided that she must at once alter her will in favour of Carola's children. Robert and Edna would, after all, have plenty. She wondered if she ought to give up her coffee, but was relieved to remember that Signora Scarelli, under orders from Julian, would not allow this. However, it would be easy to knock something off her weekly washing bill. Maddalena washed well, but her charges were preposterous. The light of battle gleamed in her eye as she prepared herself for next Monday's argument.

Bordighera.

TO A SEAGULL SEEN FAR INLAND.

Wherefore hast thou, O white crisp-cleaving bird,
 Forsaken the torn fringes of the tide ?
 Why is thy harsh lament no longer heard
 Where hour by hour the sea-smooth'd shingles slide,
 But rather, fretful, o'er this midland plain,
 Across the meadows and the berried hedge,
 Above the shadows of the tented grain,
 Beside the fir-copse and beyond the sedge ?

Art thou some banished exile cast adrift
 From out the bosom of thy natural kind,
 Condemned to wander lonely till thy shrift
 Be granted and thee dispensation find ?
 Or art thou named a legate of the sea
 That bring'st his benediction to the land,
 This land where breezes ripple constantly
 To mould the grasses as he moulds the sand ?

O bird, whatever be thy mission here,
 Thou canst not but proclaim a native air !
 I think thy polished flight is not more clear
 Than the wild memories which thy wild wings bear,
 Aye, bear and bring to me from my own youth
 Whenas I tarried watchful by the shore,
 And mixed me with thy kind in very truth,
 And shared their solitude and learned their lore.

*For we were guests together of one host,
 Rapt in the large embraces of the wind.
 And we were free together of one coast,
 And used our freedom with an equal mind !
 Go, take thy passage down the shining sky
 To thy companions stretched along the main.
 Thou canst return, O wanderer, but I
 Shall never tread my boyhood's path again.*

K. C. BAXTER.

BECAUSE THE BLACKTHORN BLOOMS.

*The blackthorn splashes foam along the edges
 Of field and wood : the sloe beside the stream
 Is starry : high above the walls and hedges
 Wild cherry lightly lifts its risen cream.*

*A bobolink among the scarlet poppies
 Tinkles his silver bells . . . O, world betrayed—
 Distracted—despairing. . In this tranquil coppice
 Green-cloistered, almost could the spring persuade
 My heart, the while I drink from beauty's chalice,
 To doubt that earth is rent by lust of power,
 By hate and fear. There is no wrath or malice,
 There is no hate, on this enchanted hour,
 Because the blackthorn blooms in English valleys,
 Because on English hills wild cherries flower !*

M. SINTON LEITCH.

Virginia.

CHRONICLES OF CORNHILL.

BY HENRY M. GREY.

CORNHILL is one of the oldest of London's streets—probably as old as Londinium itself. In the days of the Britons there was a forest path, or trackway, running east and west, which was the ancestor of Cannon Street and Ludgate Hill or Queen Victoria Street. When the Romans, on their second coming, extended the trading settlement they had found on Thames-side they built a wall around it, pierced by some half a dozen gates. The road from Camelodunum across the Essex marshes entered the town at Aldgate, and through the Newgate passed Watling Street, the great highway which led to Verulamium and the north. The Romans usually made their roads in a direct line from point to point, and the shortest cut between these two gates was along what are now Leadenhall Street, Cornhill and Cheapside. No map has come down to us to show the plan of Londinium 1,600 years ago, but excavations from time to time have unearthed fragments of pavements and remains of buildings along this line of route, and it is fair to assume that a thoroughfare followed that course.

It was not, however, until Saxon times that Cornhill received the name it still bears to-day. Chronicles of the City show that, originally, the Wards were the 'sokes,' or estates, of private persons, the Ward of Farringdon, for example, being named after Nicholas and Edward Faryngdon, the donors, who were *ealdormen*, or eminent City Fathers, in their day. Some writers have inferred from this that Cornhill derived its name from the original owner, as, in an old

document dated 1125, one Edward Upcornhill is mentioned, with several other 'Brothers of a Knighten Guild,' as conveying a 'soke' to the church. This estate thus became the soke of the Bishop of London, who appears to have delegated the management of it to a bailiff.

It would seem to be just as likely that the owner took his name from the estate, as certain Scottish chieftains and others have been known to do. In any case, the words 'corne' and 'hyll' are Anglo-Saxon, and bore the same meaning as they do to-day. Passingham¹ says that the earliest corn markets were at Cornhill and St. Michael-le-Quern (western end of Cheapside), and Stow² mentions that on Cornhill a produce market was 'time out of mind there holden.' And what more likely, seeing that where Leadenhall Market stands to-day the Forum was in Roman times, and, though the market is in the Ward of Lime Street, Stow speaks of it as 'upon Cornhill'?

But whatever the ancient market was, and wherever exactly it was held, it does not appear to have been confined to produce alone. Dealers in old clothes, known as 'frip-pers,' or 'fripperers,' were at a very early date in the habit of resorting thither, and the place seems to have acquired a certain notoriety very similar to that earned by our own Petticoat Lane of a later time. Lydgate, the monk of Bury St. Edmunds and disciple of Chaucer, loved pottering about London, and has left on record what happened to him on the occasion of his visit to this rag fair :

*' Then into Corn Hyl anon I yode,
Where was much stolen gere amonge
I saw where honge myne owne hoode,
That I had lost among the thronge ;*

¹ *London Markets.*

² *Survey of London.*

*To buy my owne hooode I thought it wronge,
I knew it well as I dyd my crede,
But for lack of money I could not speede.'*¹

So long ago as Edward the First's time the moral behaviour of the citizens would seem to have given concern to the authorities, for in 1282 Henry de Walles, the then Mayor of London, caused a prison to be built on Cornhill 'for night-walkers and other suspicious persons.' It was erected at the corner of Birchin Lane, and became known as the Tun 'because the same was built somewhat in fashion of a Tun standing on the one end.' According to Stow, 'to this prison the night watches of this city committed not only night-walkers, but also other persons, as well spiritual as temporal, whom they suspected of incontinence, and punished them according to the customs of this city.' It so happened that in 1297 several priests were found guilty of offences against the moral code, and imprisoned in the Tun accordingly. The Bishop of London was shocked—less, apparently, at the fact of their immoralities than that clerical offenders should receive punishment at the hands of the laity. He accordingly protested to King Edward, pointing out to the monarch that by The Great Charter of England the Church had a privilege that 'no clerk should be imprisoned by a layman without our commandment and breach of peace.' A Proclamation was thereupon issued, and ordered to be read in full hustings, that 'no watch hereafter enter into any clerk's chamber under the forfeit of twenty pounds. Dated at Carlisle the 18th of March the 25th of our Reign.'

Herein, moreover, was a potential source of revenue to the Church's coffers which was not lightly to be neglected, for the punishment of delinquent priests at the hands of

¹ Poem : 'London Lyckpenny.'

their superiors took the form of fines, and judging by the records of those times the opportunities of inflicting these monetary penalties were neither few nor far between. Indeed, a century later, in the reign of Richard II, we find the citizens of London protesting that they 'abhorred not only the negligence of their prelates, but also their avarice that studied for money, omitted the punishment limited by law, and permitted those that were found guilty to live favourably in their sin.'

Horried at this mercenary method of dealing with priests found guilty of offences against public morality, the citizens of London decided to take upon themselves the rights claimed by the bishops, and in spite of King Edward's proclamation determined to 'purge their city from such filthiness lest, through God's vengeance, either the pestilence or sword should happen to them, or that the earth should swallow them.'

An example of the lay method of dealing with such matters is given by Stow, the affair having occurred in his own lifetime. A certain John Atwod, a draper dwelling in the parish of St. Michael's, Cornhill, 'having a proper woman to his wife,' was in the habit of entertaining 'a lusty chantry priest' of the said parish church to supper and a friendly game at 'tables' for a pint of ale. On one occasion the game was interrupted by Atwod having to go into the shop to attend to some pressing business. He was detained for some time, and the priest took advantage of the worthy draper's absence to behave improperly towards his wife. The husband returning suddenly 'found such play to his misliking that he forced the priest to leap out at the window, and so to run to his lodging in the churchyard.' Atwod attributed no blame in this matter to his wife, she being 'one as seemed the holiest among a thousand,' but

the priest was, in consequence, apprehended and committed to the Tun. The punishment awarded him was that on three market days he was conveyed through the streets of the city, with a paper on his head whereon was written his 'trespass.' On the first day he rode in some sort of conveyance ; on the second on horseback, with his face to the animal's tail ; and on the third day he was marched between two men, a recital of his misdeeds being made each day at every street corner, in front of Atwod's house, and at the church door. Furthermore, he was deprived of his chantry, which was of the value of twenty nobles a year, and banished from the City for ever. One can hardly imagine that he would wish to remain in a place which had such unhappy memories for him !

This public parade of wrong-doers seems to have been a favoured form of punishment in olden days, as witness the stocks, the pillory, etc. In the fourteenth century a City ordinance was passed that women guilty of certain offences should first be imprisoned in the Tun, and afterwards have their heads shaved after the manner of thieves, and then led about the City 'with trumpets and pipes that their persons might be more largely known.'

To the west of the Tun prison was a well of spring water, but in the year 1401 this well was boarded over, and the Tun was converted into a cistern, the water being conveyed from the Tybourne in leaden pipes, and thereafter known as the Conduit upon Cornhill. Over the old well a new prison was built, strongly made of timber, with a pair of stocks as a necessary adjunct. On the top of this prison, or cage, as it was called, a pillory was erected 'for the punishment of bakers offending in the assize of bread, for millers stealing of corn at the mill, for bawds, scolds, and other offenders.'

An offence which was not uncommon in those days, but

for which there is little or no scope nowadays, was known as 'false inquest.' The *modus operandi* was as follows : a man would endeavour to get himself warned for jury service on *nisi prius* cases, and, if not summoned, would hang about the court in the hope of being called from among those standing around to fill the place of an absent jurymen. He would then try to get himself chosen as foreman, and do his best to induce the others to agree to the verdict he himself decided upon, which depended upon the reward he had been promised by either the plaintiff or the defendant. Several persons were convicted of this offence during the reign of Edward IV, and in the time of Henry VIII, three men, who were described as ringleaders, were condemned to ride about the City with their faces to the horse's tail, to be set in the pillory in Cornhill and afterwards at Newgate, where, the chronicler relates, 'they died for very shame.'¹ It is easier to believe that they died from the effects of the missiles thrown at them in the course of their journeyings through the City streets, as one would not associate a tender conscience with men who were capable of committing so mean a crime.

Most of the amenities of Cornhill were provided by private persons, and not at the City's expense, for a Mayor of London on two occasions paid the cost of enlarging, or otherwise improving, the Conduit. Then, too, Sir Thomas Lowell, a freeman of the City, and a member of the Grocers' Company, had a house on the north side of Cornhill which was called the Weigh House, as a 'king's beam' was installed there. To this beam merchandise of all sorts was brought from the merchants' establishments to be weighed, and the owner made a present of this house with all its appurtenances to the Grocers' Company.

¹ Fabyan's *Chronicle of England*.

Another erection of more enduring memory than the Weigh House was set up in 1582 by a man named Peter Moris, or Morris, called by Stow in one place a Dutchman, and in another a German. This was a Water Standard, which stood at the four cross-roads where Bishopsgate, Leadenhall, and Gracechurch streets meet Cornhill, and to which water from the Thames was conveyed in leaden pipes. In the course of time the Standard disappeared, but a pump stood at this spot for many years, and there are still in existence milestones outside London which record on their faces the distance from the 'Standard in Cornhill.'

In like manner, even the Royal Exchange itself, the pride of Cornhill, owes its existence to private benefaction. The project of a 'goodely Bursse' was first mooted by Sir Richard Gresham, Lord Mayor in 1538, and laid before Thomas Cromwell, the Lord Privy Seal. The idea was rejected, to be taken up a generation later by his younger son. The name of Sir Thomas Gresham will always be associated with the Royal Exchange, but, while giving all due honour to this worthy citizen, the name of Richard Clough should also be remembered in this connection. Clough was Sir Thomas's agent in the city of Antwerp, and there the merchants and others engaged in commerce had long been accustomed to meet and transact their business in a Bourse worthy of the proud eminence the city on the Schelde at that time occupied. He knew, too, the conditions obtaining in London, where business men were compelled to go to one another's houses, or meet in some open-air market to discuss their affairs—for there were, as yet, not even coffee-houses to which to resort. In December, 1561, Clough wrote to his principal expressing his views on the subject, deeming it shame that so important a city as London should lag so far behind, and pressing Sir Thomas

to put into execution the design his father had had in mind.

Thus spurred, Sir Thomas approached the City Fathers and offered to build an Exchange at his own cost if a suitable site were given him. On the site finally selected there were no fewer than eighty houses standing, but the whole lot were purchased by the citizens of London at a cost of little more than £3,500. The houses were then sold for £478 to such persons as undertook to demolish them and remove the debris, and the ground was then cleared at the City's expense. The plot of land was thereupon handed over to Sir Thomas Gresham by certain aldermen in the name of the whole citizens, and on June 7, 1566, the first foundation-stone—which, by the way, was a brick—was laid by Sir Thomas. The building was erected from the designs of a Flemish architect, and closely resembled the Bourse at Antwerp, both Flemish workmen and materials being employed in its construction. It was completed before the end of the following year, but it was not until January 23, 1570, that Queen Elizabeth came from Somerset House to the City to open it. Her Majesty first of all dined with Sir Thomas at his house in Bishopsgate Street, whence she proceeded, via Cornhill, to the southern entrance of the Bourse, and having thoroughly inspected every part of the building caused the same 'by an herald and trumpet to be proclaimed the Royal Exchange, and so to be called from thenceforth, and not otherwise.'

The building of the Exchange is stated to have cost the sum of £6,000, or thereabouts, and Sir Thomas had 'most frankly and lovingly' promised that within a month after the Bourse should be fully finished he would present it in equal moieties to the City and the Mercers' Company, of which Guild he had been a member for more than twenty

years. The shrewd merchant-prince had a reputation in some quarters of not being pedantically scrupulous in all his business transactions, and in this case, apparently, his promise was not carried out. He died in 1579, and by his will bequeathed—*inter alia*—to his widow the rents, etc., derived from the shops in the Royal Exchange, which were said to amount to some £750 per annum. After her death the building was to go to the City and the Mercers' Company in equal shares. Meanwhile, the revenue he must have derived from the property was not a bad return for the outlay expended, or as Malcolm, in his *Londinium Redivivum*, puts it, it 'was a coalition of public utility and private advantage not often equalled.'

Cornhill has been unusually unfortunate in the matter of fires. There was, of course, the Great Fire of 1666 which swept the street from end to end, and laid Gresham's Exchange in ruins. In 1748 a fire broke out in the house of a man named Eldridge, a peruke-maker in Exchange Alley, in which not only Eldridge and his whole family, but a number of other people perished in the flames. Altogether, on that occasion, nearly a hundred houses were destroyed by fire, including the London Assurance office, Tom's and the Rainbow coffee-houses in Cornhill; Garraway's, Jonathan's, and the Jerusalem coffee-houses in Exchange Alley, the George and Vulture and several other taverns and coffee-houses. In 1760 thirteen houses were burnt, and many more damaged, by a fire which originated in Hamlin's coffee-house in Sweeting's Alley. The church of St. Benet Finke was damaged by fire and water, and the Royal Exchange narrowly escaped. Five years later all the houses from Cornhill to St. Martin Outwich Church, including the White Lion Tavern which had been purchased the evening before for £3,000, and several houses in Leadenhall

Street were burnt, and several lives lost. Curiously enough, this fire also originated on the premises of a pcruke-maker, in Bishopsgate Street.

The year after the Great Fire the rebuilding of the Royal Exchange was taken in hand. Charles II laid the foundation-stone, and opened the new edifice on September 28, 1669. The cost—£58,962—was defrayed in equal shares by the City and the Mercers' Company. But again fire was to be the cause of its destruction, during a very severe frost on the night of January 10, 1838. All efforts to save the building were unavailing, the frost being so keen that the water from the fire-engines is stated to have frozen in mid-air. The bells in the clock tower had clanged out at midnight for the last time the ill-omened tune, 'There's nae luck about the house.' Before 3 a.m., when the next chimes were due, the tower had fallen with a crash into the flames below.

Nothing daunted, the Mercers' Company, who were then, as now, the owners of the building, set about the work of replacing it. More buildings were purchased east and north of the old structure, and on January 17, 1842, the foundation-stone of a new Royal Exchange was laid by the Lord Mayor, Sir John Pirie. It bore the inscription :

May God our Preserver
Ward off Destruction
From this building
And from the whole City,

and the new building was formally opened by Queen Victoria on October 28, 1844. The total cost of the increased space and the new edifice amounted to £370,000.

It is difficult to picture Cornhill as the scene of a battle, yet one actually took place there. In 1645, after the crushing defeat at Naseby, certain disbanded royalist regiments marched on London, and endeavoured to reawaken enthusi-

asm for the Royal cause. Cromwell sent General Fairfax to quell the rising, and the opposing forces met near Leadenhall Street, Fairfax being victorious. For this service Fairfax demanded from the City the sum of £50,000 for his master. The City refused, and the Cromwellian soldiers thereupon proceeded to dismantle the fortifications. Ultimately Cromwell succeeded in squeezing £20,000 out of the citizens, but when, some little time after, he was setting out on his Irish expedition he demanded from the City of London no less than £150,000 towards his expenses. The good citizens may well have thought that it was a case of Rehoboam over again.

The two churches on Cornhill which still remain, St. Peter's and St. Michael's, are on the south side of the street, and both are of very ancient foundation. St. Peter's, indeed, claims to have been founded by Lucius, 'the first king in Britain,' four hundred years before the landing of St. Augustine on these shores. There is a tablet to that effect in the church itself, but the claim is not seriously regarded by historians, the existence of Lucius himself being merely legendary. St. Michael's, on the other hand, is known to have been founded in the year 1133, and its tower, which is in imitation of the chapel tower of Magdalen College, Oxford, forms a very conspicuous city landmark at the present day. Within the church rest the remains of Robert Fabyan, the chronicler, alderman of London, and sheriff in 1493.

It was in St. Michael's Alley that the first coffee-house in London was established. This was known as Pasqua's, and later Bowman's, which first made its appearance in the year 1652, and in course of time a number of these establishments sprang up all about the neighbourhood of Cornhill.¹ The

¹ 'Old London Coffee-houses' formed the subject of an article which appeared in the October number of this magazine.

Sultanness coffee-house in Sweeting's Rents ; Garraway's, the favourite resort of Jonathan Swift, Baker's and Jonathan's all in Exchange Alley ; John's, first in Birchin Lane and later in Cornhill, frequented by Garrick and Chatterton, and where the London Chess Club was first formed ; the Jamaica, Jerusalem, and many others, all achieved a celebrity of one sort or another. Perhaps the popularity of these places reached the peak in the days of the South Sea Bubble, when all ranks of men and women—duchesses and chambermaids, Court physicians and crossing-sweepers, merchant princes and parasites, crooks and their dupes—thronged Exchange Alley in the wild hope of becoming rich in a day. As Swift put it :

*' There is a gulf where thousands fell,
Here all the bold adventurers came ;
A narrow sound, though deep as Hell,
'Change Alley is the dreadful name.*

*Meanwhile secure on Garraway's cliffs,
A savage race, by shipwrecks fed,
Lie waiting for the founder'd skiffs,
And strip the bodies of the dead.'*

The South Sea Company itself was a genuine concern. It was the very success of it which brought out so many would-be emulators, and led to an orgy of speculation the like of which has never been seen in this country, either before or since. It had been founded in 1711 by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, to take over England's floating debt of £10,000,000, the Company being granted in return a monopoly of British trade with South America and the Pacific Islands. In the boom year of 1720, when the Company's shares went soaring up on the conclusion of another favourable deal with the Government of the day, all sorts

of 'wild-cat' schemes were launched in and around Exchange Alley, and found gullible supporters. A company to turn quicksilver into malleable metal; another to make deal boards out of sawdust; another to provide £100 a year for life in return for £5 paid to the promoter 'as soon as a sufficient number had subscribed'—these, and scores of others, found eager subscribers among a public that had gone for the time being crazy. Nothing was too ridiculous or absurd, and thousands of pounds changed hands every day.

But out of all this welter of madcap schemes that were then evolved two companies were born in those fevered times which are with us to-day, known as the Royal Exchange and London Assurance Corporations. They were the first to break the monopoly of Lloyd's, Charters being granted to them by Parliament. The long association of these two Companies with Cornhill—extending in the case of the Royal Exchange over more than two centuries—and Lloyd's itself of a century and a half, may be said to have made this famous thoroughfare the centre of the insurance world.

Exchange Alley was, for a century and more, the centre of the monetary operations of London, and Cornhill itself was at one time dotted with lottery offices, one of which was run by Carroll, who was knighted as Sheriff in 1837, and Lord Mayor in 1846. The house at the junction of Cornhill and Lombard Street, where Thomas Guy, the philanthropic bookseller had had his shop, was, a century later, Pidding's lottery office. The spot afterwards became known as 'Pidding's Lucky Corner' from the following incident which is related in Timb's *Romance of London*. A certain Spanish Don was one day walking near the Royal Exchange during the drawing of the lottery of 1815, and

feeling a strong desire to have a 'flutter,' referred to his pocket-book to ascertain the number of days which had elapsed since his providential escape from Madrid. He found that they amounted to 261, and thereupon went into Pidding's office and demanded the ticket of that number. A diligent search among the neighbouring lottery offices was necessary before this number could be found, but ultimately a half-ticket numbered 261 was procured, and at five o'clock the same evening that number was drawn a prize of £40,000, the only one of that magnitude ever offered in England. Eleven years later, in 1826, the last State Lottery in England was drawn.

The literary associations of Cornhill are many and notable. Freeman's Court, which stood at the eastern end of the Royal Exchange, was swept away 100 years ago, but from 1685 to 1695 Daniel De Foe—as his name was then spelt—carried on the business of a hosier and wool dealer at that address. He afterwards moved to Tilbury to engage in the making of bricks and tiles. It seems a little incongruous to connect either of these prosaic trades with the authorship of a story of romance and adventure which has thrilled the boyhood of a couple of centuries and more, but who would have expected the immortal *Pilgrim's Progress* to have come from the pen of a Bedford tinker, or that an unfortunate Spanish soldier would give us the equally imperishable *Don Quixote* ?

Robinson Crusoe was not published until 1719, but an earlier literary venture of Defoe's was fated to meet with less happy results. This was a pamphlet entitled 'The Shortest Way with Dissenters,' which was described as 'a scandalous and seditious pamphlet,' and was, at any rate, a fine example of the author's biting irony. It was published anonymously, and gave such offence in certain quarters that, by a resolu-

tion of the House of Commons in January, 1703, it was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman in Palace Yard, Westminster. The House, at the same time, issued a reward of £50 for the author's arrest, but it was not until the following July that the offending journalist was captured. As part of his punishment he was condemned to be imprisoned during her Majesty's pleasure, and to be stood in the pillory on Cornhill, it being the idea in those days that punishments were more fittingly carried out in the locality where the offender was best known. If, in this case, it was expected that the misdemeanant would be subjected to the jeers and insults of his former neighbours, such hopes were disappointed, for John Forster, in his *Biographical Papers*, says that 'other missiles than were wont to greet a pillory reached De Foe, and shouts of a different temper, nothing more hardy than flowers being thrown at him.' Defoe himself recorded that 'the people were expected to treat me very ill, but it was not so; on the contrary they were pleased with me, and wished those who sent me were placed in my room, and expressed their affection by loud shouts and acclamations when I was taken down.'

Thomas Gray the poet, whose 'Elegy' is loved and quoted wherever the English language is spoken, was the son of a money scrivener, whose house, in 1716, stood on the south side of Cornhill, between Birchin Lane and St. Michael's Church. The house was among those destroyed in the disastrous fire of 1748 before mentioned, and a tablet was, in recent years, placed by the late Sir Edward Cooper to mark the site.

Another famous figure of Restoration days was Samuel Pepys, the diarist and one-time Secretary of the Navy. Though not by birth connected with Cornhill, the Navy Office, to which he daily repaired, was situate in Seething

Lane not very far away, and Pepys must certainly have been well known to the habitués of the various taverns and coffee-houses of the neighbourhood on account of the frequency of his visits to these places of refreshment, many of which are by himself recorded.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, essayist, poet, historian and politician, was not born in London, but was taken as an infant to the house in Birchin Lane which, in the year 1800, his parents occupied, and lived there for two years until they moved to Clapham. Laurence Hutton, in his *Literary Landmarks of London*, says that the future Lord Macaulay was daily carried along Cornhill and Threadneedle Street to take the air in Drapers Gardens, which then occupied a much wider and more open space than they do to-day.

Thomas Guy, though not strictly speaking a literary character himself, was interested in the literary productions of others in that he kept a bookseller's shop at the junction of Cornhill and Lombard Street. He is, of course, more famous as the founder of Guy's Hospital, on which worthy object he bestowed most of the great wealth he had accumulated. He had made a modest fortune out of the printing and selling of Bibles, which he further considerably increased by the purchase of seamen's tickets at a big discount. The funds thus acquired he invested in shares in the South Sea Company. In 1720, when seventy-five years of age, he is stated to have possessed £45,000 of the original South Sea Stock. When the boom began in that year the £100 shares quickly rose in value, and when they reached £300 Guy wisely decided to sell out. The rise was phenomenal, the price having, by June, reached £890, but Guy had disposed of the last of his holding at £600, thus realising a handsome fortune. He died four years later, having in the meantime built the hospital at a cost of nearly £19,000, bequeathing

£219,500 for its endowment—the largest sum ever left by an individual for charitable purposes.

Chatterton, ‘the marvellous boy, the sleepless soul, that perished in his pride,’ mentions in a letter to his sister a visit he paid to Tom’s coffee-house, which stood in Cowper’s Court, off Birchin Lane, and Colley Cibber, the actor and dramatist, was a patron of the same establishment.

The *European Magazine* was first published by I. Sewell in Cornhill on January 1, 1782, and coming to more modern times, the names of the author of *Vanity Fair*, and the famous journalist who for so many years poured out a stream of articles on almost every conceivable subject for the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, must not be forgotten when recalling the literary notabilities associated with this historic street. George Augustus Sala, in one of his books of reminiscences, has told us how, in the days when he had yet to make a name, Thackeray gave him a letter to Mr. George Smith, of the publishing firm of Smith, Elder, ‘whose place of business was then on the Hill of Corn itself.’ Sala was, at that time, contemplating the writing of a Life of Hogarth, and he found the great publisher very sympathetic towards the project, but before any definite arrangements were made the would-be biographer received a message from Thackeray which read ‘About to start new Magazine. First-rate bill of fare. Want rich collops from you. W. M. T.’

Sala responded to this summons at once and Thackeray, he relates, ‘explained to me fully the scope and purport of the new Monthly Magazine which he was to edit, and which was to be published by Messrs. Smith and Elder. He showed me the marvellously clever design for the cover of the Magazine, which was to be called the CORNHILL MAGAZINE.’ This was in 1860, and when the magazine had been successfully launched a dinner was given by Mr. George

Smith at his house in Hyde Park Square to celebrate the event. At this first 'Cornhill' dinner, which afterwards became a monthly affair, a number of distinguished guests were present, including Richard Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), Frederick Leighton and J. E. Millais, both handsome young men who were already becoming celebrated as artists, Robert Browning, Sir Edwin Landseer, Anthony Trollope, and Sykes, the designer of the magazine's cover which had evoked the admiration of its first editor.

The 'Life' was never written by Sala, but he contributed several articles on Hogarth to the CORNHILL for which he received more generous payment than he had hitherto received from any publisher. 'A very munificent publisher' was the Victorian journalist's testimony to the head of the great firm which introduced Charlotte Brontë to the British reading public.

Take it for all in all, there are few, if any, of London's streets which can show so long, so varied, and so interesting a history as that of Cornhill.

SHINTO SHRINES AND FESTIVALS.

BY D. M. ROGER.

WHAT to-day is referred to as Nipponism is but a new flowering of the Shintoism rooted in myths over two thousand years old, first recorded in the 'Kōjiki' (Record of Ancient Things) in the eighth century. This document was not printed until nine centuries later and until that time had been only in the hands of Shinto priests to transmit as they thought fit to the people. The designation of Shintoism (Way of the Gods) was not actually given to this national creed until the eighteenth century, so that for several hundred years the peoples' perception of their gods came through dance, music and ritual performed in shrine precincts, even in Buddhist temples, for mixed Shinto, in which the Shinto Gods were identified with the Buddhist dieties, was once tolerated and was not in fact considered a debased form until the Shinto Revival of two centuries ago which dissociated the two religions and helped finally to bring about the Restoration of the Mikado. As a reaction this time against Western influences, came Nipponism, or the Shinto Revival of 1932, which reached a culminating point this year when the Emperor's right hand, in the shape of the Army, freed itself from governmental restriction.

Every observer of Japan remarks the cohesive nature of the people: General Araki once said that the Chinese people were like sand and the Japanese like clay, that is they are emotionally bound as a people, largely through a continuous participation in Shinto observances, an important

part of which are festivals. The festivals of some of the Shinto shrines have been held annually in some form since the beginning of the Christian era, those of Izumo, and of the Ise shrine to the Sun Goddess being among the oldest and still drawing pilgrims from all over the country, as well as from other countries, to see the processions in ancient costume, to feel the magical or mystical communication with the ancestral spirits which are being propitiated. The organisation and preparations for festivals in the lesser prefectural and district shrines bring the people in the shrine vicinity together, and even if such festivities to-day are more perfunctory, because of many other spiritual outlets and entertainments, they are encouraged and made attractive enough to draw the people. One summer evening such a gathering was seen enjoying a Harold Lloyd movie in the open, the screen being fixed to one of the shrine buildings. On an average about three hundred festivals, small and large, are observed throughout the country every day.

Generally speaking, festivals in the rural districts are rich in beauty and those of the cities tend to tawdriness. The foreign onlooker who starts with archæological enquiries usually ends with simple enjoyment of the subdued noise of musical instruments, of ox-carts, costumes and dance. Old people will wag their heads and say the festival isn't what it was in their day; the young drummers and dancers trained to replace those who become too old for it have not the same skill. But the children squeal as loudly as ever when the warrior puppets in the side-show flick off each other's heads.

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The first glimpse of festival is unforgettable. With the innocence of a new arrival I remarked that somewhere within a mile's radius continuous drumming had been going on for two days, coming loud on the breeze, then

fading, but it was explained as 'nothing' or just 'something at the shrine.' There is a damping indifference nowadays amongst the 'upper classes' in Japan to festivals: what simple and ignorant people do is not much their concern, and they are dismayed at the eager curiosity of a cool-blooded Westerner over what is barbaric and pagan.

The house where I was guest was discretion itself, with the windows on either side of the entrance thickly slatted. Deeply solemn stone lanterns set in the trimmed pines and azaleas bordered a drive which was so thick with small round pebbles that no visitor could come in haste or unheard. The solid wooden gates to the drive stood open so that anything passing down the road could be seen from the slatted front windows without it seeing you. Sounds of deep staccato shouting had been distinctly coming nearer when they turned suddenly to commotion, and a swarm of fifty stocky men and boys in light cotton garments trampled into the pebbled drive struggling with a weighty palanquin carried high. A proud gilded crane surmounted the gorgeous gold and lacquer casket borne on the shoulders of these youths with muscular bronze arms and legs straining in their united struggle. Cotton towels were twisted wreath-like round their black heads and with white teeth bared they hissed out their chant, 'Wasshoi, wasshoi,' in ecstasy. They set down the palanquin on trestles they had carried with them, wiped away their sweat, and when they came up to ask for contributions at the house it was clear they had already been well supplied with *saké*. There were the tradesmen, shop boys and apprentices of the neighbourhood giving vent to hoarse roisterous laughter and banter in a place where any other day they would tread with respect, and the mistress of the house and the servants were rushing about setting food and drink on trays as was expected of them.

When after some minutes the wide front door was slid open full trays were handed out to the leaders. Some of the crowd wore grease paint and powder, some patterned coats with their short trousers, or lengths of yellow cotton sashed round their waists; easing their limbs, chattering, expectorating in the shrubbery, dancing, they made themselves at home.

The lady of the house bit her lip and treated them with stiff hospitality, seeing they were already gay enough. After bowing and shouting their thanks, again they hoisted the palanquin containing the divine Shinto emblem and, like a swarm of bees around it, staggered on their way.

My curiosity to know what was going on at the shrine was uncontrollable, but no member of the household would be seen going to a common festival—besides, in the crowds one might catch something—so I was put in charge of a young housemaid, and though she made a helpful guide, she evidently considered a person who wanted to go to festivals and who could not understand what was said in plain Japanese a complete illiterate. She trudged a little ahead, her wooden footwear making a hollow tuneful clink on the stones as we wound our way through narrow lanes between high bamboo fences and finally up many stone steps bordered by lanterns to the shrine on the hillside. On a permanent square stage to one side of the shrine yard two figures in comic masks were giving a slow dialogue of rustic wit with slapstick before a throng of upturned grinning faces, old and young. The shrine itself had lanterns hanging under sweeping eaves which indicated it had once been a Buddhist temple. Above the dim, lantern-lit square black pine-tops silhouetted on the night sky: here and there groups of young men strolled with their hands tucked into their black kimono sashes, small boys and girls swung on

their mothers' hands, maidservants in light kimonos, their black hair sleeked beside their broad red cheeks, stood mildly gaping. A few lighted stalls were selling sweets and toys.

Seated at the back of the stage a drummer worked incessantly and the dancers on the stage had changed : a figure of terrifying appearance in a glaring mask with long bushy white hair appeared silently as though from nowhere to do a stately dance. My guide explained it was Okagura.

The Okagura dances date back to before the sixth century, to pre-Buddhist days and the Sun Goddess myth ; more authentic performances of them are now given by a society concerned with their preservation and revival.

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It is after all the festivals of the immediate neighbourhood that make a more lasting impression than the showy ones tourists are advised to see, like the Aoi and the Gion in Kyoto and the Nikkō festivals, because willy-nilly you become a part of them, with the drumming which steals your sleep and the neighbour's children toggling themselves, your grocer breaking into a dance before his shop, instead of merely a spectator.

I was last aware of a festival when a good citizen of the district came to the door wanting to take a yen from us in exchange for a rotund white and red lantern and some artificial flowers to be hung over the front door during the week of festival at the Shinto shrine around the corner. In the old days it was a much better festival, he explained, and now they were trying to revive it. Every house was going to hang out a lantern, so we had no real alternative. A day or two later another citizen came to put up a string between the tapering trees in front of the house, hung with strips of cut white paper at intervals to keep away evil spirits.

The shrine just around the corner was dedicated to a

famous Japanese leader and warrior of the sixteenth century, Nobunaga, and had had earlier associations with the Buddhist god of war, Hachiman, hence the flocks of pigeons, which are regarded as the messengers of Hachiman, circling and strutting about the building always. Beneath the scaly copper trunks of several grown pine trees were dwarfed ones, stone lanterns, and maples set about the yard, and lesser shrines, one to Inari, the god (or goddess) of Fertility, guarded by two stone fox messengers, and a rather smaller than life-size seated stone image, thought to be the Buddhist Yakushi, the Healer, whose association with Hachiman is obvious. It was a bit puzzling at first to find that, besides having a wooden roof above him, a trough of water and dippers at one side of him, this god had clusters of round bristling pan brushes hanging all over the pillars supporting his roof. One day an old man shuffling about there threw some light on the matter : he had bad pains in his forearm, so he took a dipperful of the water, poured it over the god's head, another he poured over the god's left forearm, then he produced a little brush and rubbed the wet forearm with it, muttering some prayer in the hope that his pain would be cured. This particular Buddha was evidently considered efficacious, because one day when our cook was passing the shrine on her way to see the doctor, with her poisoned finger in a large white bandage, an old woman stopped her to advise her visiting the stone Buddha, who, she said, was a better cure for bad fingers than the hospital.

There were always things going on in the shrine yard, children playing, old men sitting sunning their skinny legs, women suckling infants, young soldiers clapping their hands and bowing before the shrine, priests burning incense within, but the annual festival was more than all this.

Like an archway across the end of our road, a platform

made of spruce-poles was erected and four drums with sometimes two or three flutes were played by relays of citizens, very zealously for the first two days of the festival to put you into a properly elated mood. A near-by empty shop was turned into a kind of temporary shrine, and here they placed the image of Nobunaga in full warrior dress, with a drooping long moustache and fierce grimace. He was brought from his permanent home in the shrine for the festivities and received offerings of rice cakes, pink and white, *saké*, fruit, vegetables, dried fish, supplied through the local shops, which came in handy to refresh the citizens who kept long vigils there in their best black kimonos. The children came and gaped and those on their mothers' backs gurgled at Nobunaga.

Lastly, people appeared from goodness knows where and set up side-shows and rows of stalls in the shrine yard and along the narrow streets near by, very brightly lit by electricity at night and selling everything—buttons, electric torches, spun sugar, celluloid dolls, goldfish, rayon socks, bottled snakes, hot stew, flags, blouses, hot bean cakes, live rabbits and the rest, like any country fair, with human freaks in tents, puppet shows, wild animals, performing cats in kimonos, conjurers, propagandists and medicine men.

By the next morning Nobunaga had been returned to his shrine and every trace of the three-day festival had disappeared. There is often more joy over the first signs of festival than over the last, and in heavy rain we took down the lantern, now useless for next year since its red monogram had run into a pink blotch. But in spite of changing conceptions of Shinto ethics, the colour of the people's festivals holds fairly fast.

EGYPTIAN ENVOI.

*Far round us broods the desert's timeless sand.
 Our little houses, girdled with bright trees
 Issue a challenge to this ruthless land,
 Home of implacable antiquities.*

*Other and nobler buildings once were here,
 Graceful and mighty pylons, towers and domes,
 Set up in pride of victory, or fear
 Of some hard god who ruled men's lives and homes.*

*Greeks, Persians, Romans, all have passed this way,
 Holding brief majesty by conquering might.
 For each the pride of Empire had its day,
 All conquering day, engulfed by endless night.*

*The desert gods still guard their ancient land,
 Six thousand years have passed since first they saw
 The sun incarnadine the tawny sand,
 And heard Osiris' trumpets call to war.*

*All others came and went—and so must we.
 Our sojourn too shall finish at the last,
 And yielding up our fleeting regency,
 Will leave the old gods to their ancient past.*

Ismailia.

HESTER PILE.

ONE, TWO, GOD'S NOT TRUE.

BY ROBERT BUCKNER.

THE teacher, Tanya Soloviev, a handsome woman of thirty with dark hair and eyes and a quiet, dignified manner, stood by an open window and watched the children working in the garden.

The wide yard surrounding the red-brick schoolhouse was covered with white sand, but beyond the low wall was an open field, already green with the tender shoots of growing corn. The round shaved heads of the young boys shone like melons in the warm sunlight as they worked, bending to spade the earth or standing erect while they compared the height of the stalks.

The field was not planted solidly, but in a checkerboard fashion, with patches of barren black ground between the budding squares. Looking at the field, Tanya Soloviev reflected without pride how well she had followed the instructions of the Commissar of Education in far-away Moscow, and how well the children in turn had obeyed her orders.

Only a month ago she had given each of the boys two plots of ground. One they called the child's plot and the other was God's plot. Both had been planted with the same kind of seed, and each day the child's plot was carefully cultivated, weeded and watered. But nothing was done to God's plot.

When summer came the child's garden would produce vegetables and flowers, while God's plot would yield only weeds and briars. 'Then the children will see for them-

selves how foolish a thing is Christian faith,' the Commissar had written confidently.

Suddenly the bell began to ring. The children stood up slowly from the wet ground and glanced rebelliously at the schoolhouse. Then at a word from one of them, a slim, lithe boy whose sensitive clear-cut features were conspicuous among the group and which marked him as its leader, the boys raised the spades to their shoulders.

Without haste they formed a column two abreast and strolled leisurely through the gate into the yard, singing in the high-pitched voices of ten-year-olds the marching song of Soviet youth :

*' One, two, God's not true,
Three, four, pray no more,
Five, six . . . '*

The teacher turned away from the window and walked back to her chair. In a few minutes the boys came in from the washroom, wiping their hands on their blouses, and sat down at the desks. The particles of dirt which still clung to their shoes and bare knees brought the rich, fresh scent of new-turned earth into the warm room. The school-room was like all others. Pinned to the walls were several crude maps and coloured pictures of fruit drawn by the children. Over the teacher's desk was draped a large flag of the Soviet Republics, while at the back of the room on a pedestal stood the white plaster head of Ivan Illitch Lenin as a child.

Though it was already the middle of April there was a chill in the air, for spring comes late to Balakovo. Tanya Soloviev directed the serious-looking boy, Alexei Vartan, to put more coal into the stove ; and she waited, looking over the students' heads, while Alexei shook the grate.

When the room was quiet the teacher looked down again

at the notice which she had received that morning. There were very few days that passed without some letter of warning or advice from the Commissar. At the top of each bulletin appeared the grim reminder that for any teacher who failed to execute her orders there would follow immediate dismissal from duty and expulsion from the Party.

Tanya Soloviev brushed her hair with the back of her hand and spoke quietly : 'Pioneers, before we go any further with to-day's work I regret to inform you that the League says we have fallen behind in our collection of the holy images. The Stavropol school is now twenty full points ahead of us, and there are only three days left.'

The children looked around at each other in surprise. This was a serious business. Their class's position in the holy image contest conducted by *The League of Fighting Atheists* was the envy of all Samara, and, if they lost, it would bring disgrace to every student in Balakovo.

At the rear of the room the leader, Alexei Vartan, after hesitating thoughtfully for a second, stood up and addressed the teacher in a loud clear voice : 'My father keeps a picture hidden on the top shelf of our wardrobe, Tanya Soloviev. But I am not sure it is a holy picture.'

'So : Then why should he hide it ?' She asked the required question listlessly. 'Remember, Alexei, you have signed the solemn pledge to bring in every ikon, picture of our Lord and the saints, and all crucifixes found in your home. Tell me, what is this picture of your father's like ?'

The boy looked doubtfully at his desk before replying. 'I think it is a saint. Anyway, it is set in the centre of a big gold cross.'

'Then I am sure it is a saint's picture, Alexei,' the teacher nodded firmly. She looked at him and waited.

At this news the children stirred and began to whisper

excitedly among themselves. A saint's picture in a gold cross should be worth fifty points, perhaps even more. Their eyes turned admiringly to their leader.

'I will bring it to-morrow,' Alexei Vartan replied quietly, and sat down.

The single room which Alexei shared with his father, a bookkeeper in Metal Plant No. 15, was in a vast block of cement barracks near the Volga piers. The simple furnishings consisted of a white iron bed, a gas stove, a shelf filled with books, two straight wooden chairs and the rickety desk where they ate and read by the single light. The only colour in the square grey room was a poster of the Crimea tacked on the wall, and a pair of faded blue curtains at the window, unevenly cut and sewn by the father's blunt fingers.

Stepan Vartan was forty-two, a tall and silent widower with greying hair and dark deep-set eyes, whose lean mobile face was veiled by the impenetrable mask of his generation.

It was a mask which puzzled his son, for it had none of that joy and hopeful enthusiasm which Alexei had learned was the sign of a cheerful worker. But Alexei's doubts were natural, for it was a face that haunted Moscow too, this mask of Stepan Vartan's. They knew well enough in the Kremlin what it concealed. It was the badge worn by a million men Stepan Vartan's age and older; men who had been born and raised under the Old Régime, who had survived impassively the convulsions of civil war and starvation, men who said nothing but sat waiting, waiting and watching . . .

No, it was quite impossible for anyone in Russia, especially their own families, to know what the million Stepan Vartans thought. True enough, they went through the lip-service necessary to join the Party and get their jobs.

But their children regarded them as suspiciously as did Moscow, with open contempt as misfits, curiosities, queer fish who were better dead and out of the way of progress.

The night after Alexei stole the holy image from the wardrobe shelf and gave it to Tanya Soloviev for the school's anti-religious chest, his father washed the supper dishes hurriedly and changed from his working clothes to the suit he wore only on Rest Days—and on those nights when he went alone to the Cathedral. For though the fine churches of Balakovo were now all silent and crumbling with neglect—their altars and windows covered by immense cartoons of Christ and the saints in unspeakable positions—the great Kazan Cathedral was kept open as a museum for the amusement of the people now freed from all such superstition and ignorance.

Alexei pretended to study while he watched his father's movements from the corner of his eye. He held his breath when at last Stepan finished dressing and reached up to the top shelf for the image which always accompanied him on his secret visits to the church.

Stepan felt carefully in all the corners of the shelf. Then he swept a pile of papers to the floor in his frantic, futile search. After a moment he turned and walked slowly across the room to the desk, where his son's head was bent low over a book.

'Alexei, have you seen the cross in the cupboard?' he asked.

The boy looked up at his father, his face red with guilt, and he stammered: 'Yes, I g-gave it to the teacher, Tanya Soloviev.'

Stepan turned suddenly pale and sank into the chair. 'But why, son? Why did you give it to her?' he whispered incomprehensively.

Alexei, recovering most of his courage and defiance, clapped the book shut and leaned across the desk, his blue eyes flashing. 'Why? Because every one of us has pledged his word to help wipe the very idea of God out of Russia. *That's* why I took it!'

'*Wipe—the—very—idea—of—God——*' Stepan echoed, staring at his son.

'Don't speak that word!' Alexei reminded him severely. And then, confused by the expression on his father's face, the boy suddenly burst forth with all his pent-up emotion . . .

'I tell you God is not, not, *not*! And religion is the opiate of the people!' he exclaimed hotly, standing up and clenching his fists.

'Be quiet, Alexei,' Stepan commanded. 'You forget that you are speaking to your father.'

'My father!' the boy scoffed. 'You have made me ashamed to call you my father, sneaking out to the Cathedral at night when you think there is nobody looking. But I saw you. I followed you there! . . . And the other boys have found out that you never go to work on Holy Saturday or Easter. When they ask me why, I pretend not to know, or else deny it. Well, I shan't any longer!'

'But, Alexei, there are many of us who do not work on those days,' Stepan explained gently.

'What of it? Then you are all fools, traitors, *all of you*!' his son cried, great tears welling in his eyes. For in an infinite though piteously hidden measure to which he would never have admitted, Alexei loved his father. He loved him with all a ten-year-old boy's adoration for a brave Don Cossack who had once worn the Order of St. George on his tunic; and he loved him with all the

fixed devotion of an only child who has never known another parent. But whenever, as now, these emotions arose, they made Alexei deeply ashamed of his sentimental weakness. He turned away and blinked back his tears.

Stepan closed his eyes as if his son had struck him across the face. He arose unsteadily and looked down at Alexei's shaven head, as round and pink as it had been years ago when he was a baby. Suddenly Stepan reached out a hand and drew the boy to his side.

'Oh Alexei, why did you do it?' he whispered hoarsely. 'That was all I had left of——'

'B-but I *had* to do it!' Alexei's face turned up as he tried to explain. 'We signed the pledge to confiscate all the ikons and saints' pictures we could find. Don't you see, Father, I gave my *word*.'

'I see, son. Only it wasn't exactly a saint's picture, Alexei.' Stepan ran his short blunt fingers affectionately over his son's head.

'Why—it *was* a saint's picture, wasn't it, Father?' the child asked excitedly.

Stepan pulled his cap from a pocket and walked towards the door. He turned and replied without facing the boy directly: 'Yes, in a way it was, Alexei . . . you see, that was your mother's picture.' He went out and shut the door softly behind him.

Little Alexei stared at the door for a full minute after his father had gone before the words fully penetrated his bewildered child's brain. Then he ran blindly across the room, sobbing bitterly, and threw himself upon the bed.

Below in the street Stepan buttoned the grey, many-patched cavalry coat as he walked towards the distant town, leaning his weight into the cold night wind which swept

off the spring-flooded Volga. And as he walked he thought of what had just happened in the room.

No, Alexei was not to blame. He was a good boy at heart. Only they were trying desperately to rip that heart out of him and put in its place another of their own making, a thing of steel and ice.

The vision angered Stepan for a moment, until he recalled with a wry smile how Alexei looked in the mornings, asleep at his side—his smooth forehead unwrinkled by knotty riddles, his lips puckered so innocently that it was impossible to believe them ever capable of any mockeries of God. And yet he had said . . .

At the left of the Grain Place in the centre of the town Stepan halted in the shadows of the Cathedral and glanced cautiously about the deserted square. The houses and the street-lamps were now dark. There was no light in Balakovo except that of a cold waning moon, and no sound but the far-off whistle of a river boat. Stepan turned up his collar, ran quickly up the steps and slipped through a small side door into the church.

The moonlight through the shattered windows cast a silvery shaft upon the old worn stones, while in the gloom between the tall columns the grotesque faces of the mock-saints leered down at him from their posters.

Upon entering, Stepan was not surprised to observe the light of a single candle glimmering in the still Cathedral. The woman whose head was hooded by her kerchief was almost always here at this hour, kneeling before the Kazan Madonna, now partly covered by a canvas with a hideous parody of The Last Supper.

Before the altar of his name-saint Stepan knelt and prayed ; a short prayer, for there was nothing whatever that he wanted for himself. And as for Alexei . . . now Stepan

knew that his son must continue alone on his strange road, to whatever happiness might be in store for him. For his own good, Alexei must be like the others. He must think and act and—yes, believe as everyone else did. It was too lonely and dangerous otherwise.

He arose stiffly from the stone floor and turned to leave, when the woman with the kerchief passed, her footsteps padding softly in the peaceful silence. Directly opposite him she looked up and smiled in recognition ; and Stepan, who had always supposed her to be one of the Old Believers, some simple aged peasant, was amazed to find the face of a young woman whose dark and burning eyes met his in complete understanding.

Stepan drew a quick breath and stared after her. What ? he thought—was it possible then that there were *young* people too who still believed, who could not forget—who, in spite of all their new culture, could not forget the old faith of their childhood ? Stepan crossed himself slowly and reverently, as one who has beheld a sign. He waited until the woman was safely on her way, then he also returned quietly through the narrow doorway into the night.

Alexei was asleep when his father reached home. The Young Pioneer, his unhappy face furrowed with the tracks of tears, lay fully dressed upon the bed. Stepan smiled as he slipped off his son's clothes and eased him into the covers, gently, without waking him.

He sat for a long while on the edge of the bed and looked tenderly at the sleeping child, as one studies for a last time the beloved dead. And honestly, Stepan asked himself, what need had Alexei in his new and throbbing world for an old bewildered ghost who had not the grace to die ? His decision made in the church, never again to interfere or

question the wisdom of his son's fixed career, already seemed to have widened the great abyss between them.

Stepan recalled a banner which Alexei's class had carried in the last May Day parade—*Willing clay for the State to mould into The New Man*. And what sort of man would they have made of Alexei when they finished : he wondered. All those titles he would wear—Komsomol, Rabfak, Red Star Worker—what did they stand for : What did they mean on the banner by The New Man : It was all a queer, muddled business, and entirely beyond him ; Stepan shook his head as he undressed. Why, anyone with a kopeck's worth of imagination could tell them that beneath all their fine names and obscure pledges the children would remain simple Russians. Ideas fool the brain, not the soul.

For there had been times, he remembered with certainty, in the summer on his Rest Days, when they went swimming together in the river or took their lunch into the chalk hills beyond Tersa, where he told Alexei of the wars and of his boyhood long ago beside the Don, when Stepan Vartan *knew* that he had been close to his son. Then they had understood each other.

But now they had stolen even that away from him ; coldly, systematically, as a part of the Plan. Oh, they were clever, so damnably clever, those teachers !

He lay awake thinking of the devils who were filling Alexei's head with their ideas, and found it altogether impossible to picture them.

In Stepan's childhood only men had taught school. Great bearded giants they were too, in long black coats always streaked with snuff. They roared terrifyingly, but no one was really afraid of them. He recalled one teacher, old Dmitri Vitachek, who used to read fairy tales to them. He could imitate the sounds of the birds and the animals

and the voices of the princess and the ogre, until the whole class would be weak with excitement and laughter. Once Stepan had asked Alexei if they still read the old tales and had received the scornful reply, 'No, of course not ! Tanya Soloviev says they are all sentimental rot which hamper our minds and the advancement of the Cause. She says we must have stories that are *real*, not fantastic bedtime tales !'

The teachers again. They had an answer for everything. But how did they answer to themselves, he wondered, those older ones who *knew* they were lying :

It had always been Stepan Vartan's simple nature to confront his enemies openly, and though he realised its futility, his sudden desire to meet Alexei's teacher became almost an obsession. He thought about it all the next day at his desk in the whirring chaos of Metal Plant No. 15.

There was no difficulty about it, he found. Parents were encouraged to visit the school. But what would he say : The teacher would naturally take him to be a good Communist father interested in his son's work. And he couldn't understand his son's work. He had tried, but the books made no sense. Perhaps if he just saw her and talked with her she might explain some of the things which puzzled him, and then Alexei would no longer be ashamed of his father's ignorance and think him a fool.

The following was Stepan's Day of Rest. He said nothing of his intentions to Alexei at breakfast, but early in the afternoon when he knew the boys would be working in the garden he arrived at the schoolhouse, wearing his best suit with a white shirt and his hands scrubbed clean.

He approached the building slowly, with suspicion. At the gate he hesitated for a while, wondering if he should

turn back ; but was led into the yard by a sudden strong urge which surprised him.

One of the younger teachers, a short thick-set woman with glasses, leaned in the doorway smoking a cigarette and watching Stepan closely.

‘ Well, Comrade, who is it you want to see ? ’ she called out in a loud and friendly voice.

Stepan blushed and removed his hat. ‘ Is—is the teacher named Tanya Soloviev here ? My son——’ He paused and nodded towards the children in the garden.

The young woman turned in the doorway and pointed behind her with the cigarette. ‘ Second door on your right,’ she directed him casually.

Stepan walked up the steps and into the dark hall. He knocked softly at the door, and after a moment a woman’s tired voice told him to enter.

The teacher was standing with her back to the light at the far side of the room. Stepan remained in the doorway fumbling with his cap as he looked around at the drawings and the statue of the Lenin-child.

‘ Yes, Comrade ? ’ the woman asked politely, moving towards him.

Stepan’s gaze came back to her and he bowed quickly. ‘ I am Stepan Vartan—Alexei Vartan’s father,’ he explained.

‘ Oh yes. I am glad you have come. Parents are always welcome,’ the teacher replied automatically, and held out her hand. ‘ I am Tanya Soloviev.’

Stepan’s eyes met hers absently, then widened with surprise. For a hushed and breathless moment they stared at each other in sudden shocked discovery.

‘ But—you are the woman I——’

Tanya Soloviev flung her hand across Stepan’s mouth and glanced wildly at the open door.

'Be quiet!' she whispered, white with terror. She drew Stepan by the hand to the rear of the room, where she turned to face him.

'Yes, I am the woman you saw in the Cathedral,' she confessed, her dark eyes fixed upon his defiantly. 'And now of course you are honour-bound to report me.'

Stepan looked straight into her eyes and at the firm full lips now tremulous with fear. He shook his head and held tightly to her hand, as if he were afraid of losing it.

'But why should I tell anyone?' he asked.

'Then why have you come here?' the teacher pleaded, '—for the cross which Alexei stole? I haven't it. They have taken it away.'

'No, not for the cross,' Stepan replied honestly. 'I came here to see for myself the people who teach Alexei to steal and to say . . . to say there is no God.'

The woman dropped her eyes. 'How you must hate me,' she said.

'No, Tanya Soloviev, I do not hate you,' Stepan answered her slowly. 'I have long ago finished with hating anything.'

Suddenly, fearing that he might go away before she could explain, the teacher caught the lapels of Stepan's coat with both hands and exclaimed fervently: 'Don't you see, they sent me here because they suspected I was a Believer! My father and my brothers were trained in the Church. It is an old trap they set for teachers. But now . . . now it is work or die, and I know nothing but this——' She spread her hands towards the desks.

'They *knew*, and still they kept you here?' Stepan whispered.

'Yes, yes!' she nodded feverishly. 'This is their sentence that I have to serve. They never told me that I would some day have to teach people to despise God . . . Oh,

do you think it is easy for me to drill their blasphemies into these children ? . . . But now if I ran away or asked for other work I would be playing directly into their hands. Besides, I have nowhere to go . . . *Now* do you understand, Stepan Vartan, why I must stay ?' She dropped her hands limply and closed her eyes.

'Yes, now I understand,' Stepan replied quietly, looking down at her bowed head with an old forgotten emotion that stirred him deeply and powerfully.

'Anyway, what does it matter ?' the teacher said as if to herself. 'They have their faith and we have ours. Nothing can ever change that.'

'Yes, they have—' he nodded at the Lenin-child, 'and we have God.'

'Do you think He understands about this, and can forgive me ? *Do you ?*' she asked eagerly.

'I think—I think He must have led me here.' Stepan caught both her hands in his.

Tanya looked up at him and smiled through shining eyes. 'From the first night I saw you kneeling there alone I asked the Madonna if—perhaps some time——'

Above them in the building the bell began to ring.

In the garden the boys stood up from the wet ground and raised the spades to their shoulders. Then at a command from Alexei they formed their column and marched slowly through the gate into the yard, singing in the high sweet voices of children :

*'One, two, God's not true,
Three, four, pray no more,
Five, six . . .'*

New York.

BY THE WAY.

FOR what seems now quite a long period, though in reality it is of no great duration, we have had in this country a very welcome respite from those internecine industrial disputes and stoppages which grievously marked the decade after the War : we have climbed accordingly—in spite of the obstinate existence of what we euphemistically call ‘ the special areas ’—from the depth of the depression in which we wallowed in 1931. And we have been able to praise ourselves as happily different from other internally jarring nations. There are signs, however, now that this enviable state of things may be changing : at the time of writing they can perhaps be called slight, but they are nonetheless distinctly ominous—here and there at least in various industries and forms there is a renewal of that uneasy under-current with the workings of which we grew unhappily familiar. It is a sad comment upon human nature that when industry is in the doldrums there is less obvious unrest than when it prospers : in the former case presumably men are loth to risk the little they have and make bad worse, in the latter belief grows easily that others are being unduly rewarded. Let us hope that in this febrile world, in which British sanity and common sense have parts to play of even more supreme importance than ever before, these qualities will be exercised as powerfully in the national as in the international field.

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And in that latter field, more and more clearly visible, continue to widen the two muddy swamps that go by many differing names, according to the company kept, but are in general distinguished as Fascism and Bolshevism. One of the puzzles of understanding the extreme animosity

of the one to the other is that to the uninitiated—or at any rate to the unprejudiced—they both often seem to stand for the same things, namely, the domination of the autocrat and the suppression of the liberties of the individual. ‘Democracy is done for!’ cries Mussolini. Stalin has said that for years. In a reasonable world the two would, one would think, hail each other as brothers, as brothers-in-arms if need be: instead of that, they glare at one another across the bayonets and bomb-factories of Europe. Beyond discussion, it is at present in no sense a reasonable world; and even the slogan of every injured intervener, ‘A plague on both your houses,’ does not help matters much. Nothing does except a strong and steady faith, coupled—for Britons at least—with a profound belief in the virtues of liberty.



Molly is missing from her corner: for years she has sat there, the last-left of any crossing-sweeper of whom I have any knowledge, possibly the last of any in the world. In her younger days she was an institution, busy and bustling and with a humorous tongue; in later times, crippled and confined to a chair, she has watched with bright eyes and indomitable interest the changing, noisy world. The houses about her pitch are all William and Mary or at the latest Anne: is it too fanciful to think of Molly as of the same remote period? She would have looked well at the door of a sedan-chair. Passing her not long ago when out with my young children, I told them that when I was a boy (which is after all not a hundred years ago) there were crossing-sweepers at most of the principal corners of London streets. ‘But what for?’ they asked in puzzled unison. ‘To sweep back the mud, of course,’ I answered. ‘It was often a foot high at least at the sides.’ They would not believe me till I insisted: then they supposed me more

definitely from the Ark than they had previously decided. And yet few recollections are more vivid to me of walks in childhood and even well on into boyhood than those great, greasy masses by the roadside into which pebbles and other small objects could be dropped to be sucked slowly and excitingly into the depths. So completely and so rapidly do conditions of daily life now change that even to me as I walked on with the children it seemed almost impossible to believe that these recollections were actually my own and not just curious facts read in a history book.

★ ★ ★

How strangely and how strongly blood sometimes works, through all the mists of time and circumstance ! Recently I had to re-visit Scotland after an interval of many, many months to give an address on the future, and the first glimpse of that wonderful country seen from the train in the gloaming of a winter's day stirred me, thinking as I was of my impending address, in so sudden a blend of mystery and pride that I wrote these lines as its conclusion :—

*The quiet hills of Scotland,
How strengthfully they stand !
They breathe to me uplifted
A soul-possessing land.*

*Beyond the brag and bluster
That fever half mankind
They rise in sober bounty
A bulwark God designed.*

*The spirit of this people
Above the tempest rides,
A light undimmed, undaunted—
Whatever fate betides.*

No doubt with the laudable object of encouraging me in my labours, a friend told me the other day that he had been talking to the Editor of a popular magazine and had asked him what kind of people read the pages of his production. 'God knows,' replied the Editor : 'I hope I've never met any.' I am afraid I have not yet acquired that contempt for my audience which has been called the chief prerogative of the bore. Is it, I wonder, the secret also of that elusive quality, popularity ?

* * *

Books seem to have come to me for this month's commentary in pairs. There are, first of all, two which have for their subject the inexhaustible interest of England, and they differ from one another nearly as much as one English county differs from another. In *England's Character* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.) S. B. P. Mais takes the reader on a personal tour of wandering inspection and interest ; it is all pleasantly discursive and as agreeable as a book that has no special originality or distinction can be. W. J. Blyton's *English Cavalcade* (Murray, 7s. 6d. n.) is of other calibre : this author is known to readers of CORNHILL as possessing to a quite abnormal degree a blend of knowledge both of English literature and of English country life ; he has been, and remains, a man of letters and culture, he is also now daily in practical communion with the life of the fields, and in this book he gives us of his best from both springs. This is England, shire by shire as she has been seen, loved, and described by all the great users of her tongue ; it is a book which lovers of English letters and English country will long wish to keep by their bedsides.

* * *

On Constable's list of new publications are two books

which can be bracketed only by reason of their publisher : they are evidence at least of his catholicity of choice. One consists of a bundle of recently discovered letters all written to *Dear Miss Heber* (8s. 6d. n.) at the end of the eighteenth century. As a publication they suffer to some extent in interest by reason of the fact that they are all to this vague and unknown young lady and none of her answers have been preserved ; moreover, they are in my judgment over-presented. The introduction by Francis Bamford is necessary to their understanding, but the two prefaces severally added by Georgia and Sacheverell Sitwell are largely redundant, and the notes, whilst of value to the student, are so enumerated and set apart as to be annoying to the general reader. These letters have neither the variety nor the interest of such a collection as that presented by Arthur Bryant in his *Postman's Horn*, but, nevertheless, they have the quiet attraction of their period and what could be better than this from the sedate and conscientious Miss Iremonger, written in August, 1789, 'Is there in Nature ought so fair as the mild Majesty of private life ?' The second book is also a collection, in this case of short studies brought together by the American writer, Paul Horgan, under the title *Lingering Walls* (7s. 6d. n.). Every one of these is well written and dramatic, if a trifle macabre ; their defect as a collection is that when once the reader has grasped the generic significance of the title the end of each is known as soon as it is begun—which necessarily detracts from the essential drama. But the stories are unquestionably good.

★ ★ ★

And two novels, both from Harrap (7s. 6d. n.) and both—as is usual nowadays—written by women, in the case of

Plaque with Laurel, written by the two who, after the manner of 'Michael Field,' write under the joint name of 'M. Barnard Eldershaw': these are Australians, and it is of Australia they write, adopting on this occasion the now overused device for novel-making of getting together a lot of people for a few days in one place and noting down their actions and reactions. The previous two novels of 'M. Barnard Eldershaw' have been highly praised and by critics as noteworthy as Arnold Bennett, and *Plaque with Laurel* comes out with what is now generally known as a 'recommendation': it is an account of an Australian Writers Conference held at Canberra to unveil a plaque to an illustrious dead author, Richard Crale, but to me it remains a bit of a puzzle; it is clever enough, but so removed from reality. Authors, I know, are popularly supposed to talk continually, conceitedly, and maliciously about books, their own and their rivals, but in fact they hardly ever do—and I find it quite impossible to believe that Australian authors are all such gas-bags and nit-wits as they are here presented. The other novel, *The Old Ashburn Place*, by Margaret Flint, is announced as the winner of the \$10,000 prize in the Fourth Dodd Read Novel Contest and it certainly deserves attention: it is New England, life in and around a family on a homestead; it is not exactly a pleasant story, but it is undeniably very well told, a tale of two brothers and their unwilling rivalry and unbroken love for each other. Charlie, Morris, and the purposeful Elsie all live, but it is idle, kindly, old 'Pop' who is really the making of the book. Quite a novel to read, with its terseness, its drama, and its skilful portrayal of the minds of the inarticulate.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 161.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page 14, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 31st March.

' Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the ——— for ever, it ——— '

1. ' She ——— —the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.'
2. ' Or emptied some dull ——— to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk : '
3. ' Why, why ———, my pensive friend,
At pleasures slipp'd away : '
4. ' She left the web, she left the ———,
She took three paces thro' the room, '
5. ' If there were ——— to sell,
What would you buy : '

Answer to Acrostic 159, January number : ' *Ocean Green* ' (James Clarence Mangan : ' *Dark Rosaleen* '). 1. OwinG (Hood : ' *The Bridge of Sighs* '). 2. CideR (Keats : ' *To Autumn* '). 3. EvE (Keats : ' *Song of the Indian Maiden* '). 4. Above (John Clare : ' *Written in Northampton County Asylum* '). 5. NooN (Shelley : ' *From the Arabic* ').

The first correct answers opened were sent by ' Lorain,' Bournemouth, and Mrs. G. E. Owen, Green Hall, Carmarthen, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL 1937.

DARK HORSES.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

I.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF CHALLICE.

UPON rising land above the water-meads of Exe, there stands Merton Magna—a hamlet of such limited dimensions that one might speculate as to the size of Merton Parva, did so tiny a thorpe indeed exist. The church, a sprinkling of thatched cottages and one or two substantial and ancient dwellings within their own walled domains complete this village and a high road runs through the midst, emerging from a network of Devonshire lanes on the one side and disappearing into like dim leafy channels upon the other. Perhaps two hundred persons had sufficed to fill the parish roll, and among these many occupied outlying farms and solitary cottages.

Of the inhabitants five dwelt under one roof beside the lichgate, and Church Cottage was the name of their venerable home. Its eastern wall formed an actual part of the churchyard boundary and from the sole upper window upon that side the graves might be seen in orderly companionship where the families of Merton Magna lay side by side, their friendships ended, their feuds composed, their relationships recorded on slate and stone.

The face of Church Cottage was whitewashed and a silvery thatch extended in thick eaves above the bedroom windows ; the woodwork had lately been repainted emerald green and an air of cheerful prosperity marked the old house.

Before it spread a garden bright with knots of spring blossoms, where daffodils and stocks, wall-flowers and primroses at present flourished ; while above the wicket-gate a laburnum and a pink thorn would presently shine together. Behind the house extended a little vegetable patch with a well in the corner of it that had never been known to fail. Above the well there stood a cherry tree already snowed with blossom and musical with honey-bees.

Upon the east of this dwelling rose a little church to its embattled tower and rugged pinnacles. The fabric was grey, enriched with orange-red lichens upon the western wall. They spattered the stonework and shone like gold at sunset-time. A few great conifers shaded the burying ground and southerly the land fell steeply down into open vales, where Exe ran with many a loop and reach and ripple to her estuary, long miles away.

At Church Cottage dwelt Richard Challice. He followed the craft of wheelwright, as his father and grandfather had done before him, and his family consisted of a mother, wife, two sons and a daughter.

Verity Challice, now seventy-eight years old, was not of local stock. Some half-century earlier in her life she had met her son's father, when he came to work at a gipsy camp ; and while engaged upon a broken caravan, in which she dwelt with her parents, Samson Challice had fallen in love with Verity Tarleton and won her. The Tarletons were 'Broom Squires' from Somerset—an ancient, nomad clan, who roamed the heaths and highways in summer and retreated to village homes when winter came. They were indeed camped on Honiton Common when the young pair met, and though a house on anything but wheels had never entered into Verity's calculations, love made the prospect light and she surrendered her gipsy kindred and came to

Merton Magna happily enough. She was eight-and-twenty when she wedded, and at Church Cottage she had dwelt for fifty years, reigned in her husband's lifetime and borne one son. When Samson's days were over and Richard Challice took his place, she dwelt with her boy, watched over him and only yielded her guardianship after Richard married Ivy Southcott, a local woman.

Granny Challice had left the best bedroom when Ivy came and chosen a little chamber on the eastern side of her home. From its window she could see dawn break behind the church tower and look down upon the Challice graves grouped together, not twenty yards from the house in which many of them had lived their lives. There lay the dust of Richard's forbears and stood a white marble slab among the time-eaten grey stones, beneath which lay Verity's husband ; and while she sat at her bedroom window, smoked her pipe and surveyed Samson's sleeping-place, she would often speculate without emotion on the narrowing span of days that now separated her from the destined place at his side.

Ivy was still a pretty woman, blue-eyed and flaxen-haired ; and she took pains with her appearance, which is not a matter that her kind much trouble about after a husband and home of their own are won. But her energies extended not much into her duties. She was a lymphatic, easy-going and gloriously untidy person—a dreamer, who shared her sons' ambitions : to leave the ancient surroundings and seek a new home elsewhere under the conditions of colonial life. If she maintained one steadfast fancy it was that ; and her boys, Leonard and Samson, heartily supported her in this vain vision. Both lads, when upbraided for their slackness, declared that given a new start amid the virgin delights of Australia, or Canada, they would do wonders and even rival

their father's sleepless energy and appetite for hard work. Meantime Samson laboured with Richard Challice at the wheelwright's shop in the village and Leonard worked as an under-gamekeeper upon neighbouring estates. Both lived at home and neither created the least enthusiasm from those set over them ; but they rose to some intensity of feeling in one direction, for they were devoted to each other. They also esteemed their mother, who loved them well enough and declared that none understood their promise save herself. Their grandmother held that Richard's family pulled her son down and entertained no respect for her daughter-in-law, or the young men. Even to the cigarettes that Leonard and Samson smoked she laughed at them—pointed to their father's pipe and her own, declared that not an anodyne, but a tonic was what the slack-twisted couple needed. But they had the laugh at her sometimes, for old Verity was full of folklore and dead wisdom, believing in many things that made a younger generation scoff. She clung to her opinions none the less and found them of stronger support than the school knowledge of a rising generation.

The wife of Richard was fond of ruminating on her troubles, despite their tenuous nature, and chief among the little crosses that marked her even way was her husband's mother. She knew that Richard possessed deep affection for both wife and parent, yet felt it hard that his tendency was ever to feel Verity in the right. She realised that his material interests derived no benefit from her and she regretted that his means were small ; but that troubled her less than Richard's inability to appreciate his sons. His impatience with them struck her as unfatherly, and for her part she considered that the boys were made of finer clay than their father and would prove it if ever opportunity

offered. Richard never grumbled now. He had grown accustomed to Ivy's impassive, untidy manner of life, and the disappointment of finding that both his lads were like her had long been lived down. He still strove to inspire them, yet less strenuously than of yore ; but their lack of aptitude and richness of futile imagination combined to kill hope for either of them. They were a shadowy pair, though not unlovable, and their father often wished that one or both had been girls and his daughter a boy, for she alone echoed him in mind and body and was of the true Challice breed. He uttered this vain thought to his mother sometimes when he talked to her, but never to his wife. Verity indeed agreed with him.

Verity liked her grandson Leonard the better, because in him she detected a streak of authentic, gipsy blood. Her own son had never revealed a trace of the Tarletons. He was a Challice to the marrow in his bones ; but Leonard displayed nomad instincts and characteristic traits which, if not admirable in themselves, pleased the old woman by association. He had been a romancer from his childhood and even now, at nineteen years of age, could not be trusted to separate the real and imaginary. When reproved in childhood for transparent falsehoods, he showed no shame and explained his weakness without a blush.

'My mind runs away with me, Granny,' he said on one occasion, 'and then I hear things and see things so real that, of course, I believe 'em and tell 'em again.'

He had not quite lost his infantile habits of thought, and Richard often warned him before statements that rang truer than of old, yet contained grave challenges for doubt.

'The trouble with you, Len, is that you've got such a foggy habit of brain you don't know the difference between falsehood and fact—a most untrustable chap ; and some day

you'll get believed when you're lying, or else disbelieved when you're telling truth, and then, either way, ill may overtake you.'

So Richard lectured him ; and Leonard would smile as of old and say that his wits were still occasionally apt to run away with him.

His mother rather admired Leonard's inventive powers.

'If he was in another walk of life,' said Ivy, 'he'd turn it to a purpose and tell tales and get paid for doing so, same as men who write stories. Then very like he'd be praised instead of blamed.'

Ethelinda Challice came between her brothers and was a girl of eighteen. She best loved her father and was best understood by him. She had ever been independent and energetic, and since the family circumstances demanded that every member of it must work for a living, the girl had gone into service and brought native good will and good sense to a housemaid's task. For eighteen months she had laboured cheerfully, but now stood to lose her place owing to death and change. Her father felt no regret, for Ethelinda promised to stop at home awhile before seeking a new place. She had worked at one of the private homes in Merton Magna and seen her family every week. At present she was 'walking out' with a desirable wooer, but did not share his deep devotion. He was one John Caryl, her father's head man at the wheelwright's forge—an immensely powerful, red-headed lad of twenty-six years old. He possessed every natural virtue, but was ungifted with any powers of mind or speech. One more silent, save the dumb, never walked this vale. But he was a good listener and most notable confident, for nobody ever heard him repeat anything that he had learned ; and some held this to John Caryl's credit, while others declared that

it was vacuity rather than wisdom that made the wheelwright such a drear companion.

The Challices were a personable folk and each one of them could claim some measure of good looks.

Richard himself was typical of the ancient breed—tall, flaxen, Saxon—with blue eyes and corn-coloured hair—the ‘daps’ of his father as Verity always declared. His sons were dark and lightly built like their mother ; his daughter was even fairer than himself and of his large-boned and powerful quality. But Ethelinda’s loveliness could not be challenged. Though tall for a woman, she possessed poise and grace, and her complexion and features evinced the distinction of real beauty. Her expression was serene, but something of her capability appeared in it, for her mouth spoke of will ; her eyes were steady and her voice clear and determined. She possessed just that element of decision for which character has to be thanked—a gift not to be acquired by taking thought and often patent in a child of five, or as clearly lacking in a man of fifty. She deplored her brothers’ want of purpose and had been glad to go to work, since her mother and she were never on terms of close friendship and understanding.

The demands of his business did not serve to fill all the wheelwright’s time, or occupy more than half his energies at most. He loved toil and was full of expedients for adding to his very moderate means ; but the deeds that he could do represented no great return, and he spent much of his leisure in serving his neighbours for nothing. He was an orchard expert and well skilled in fruit-growing ; he claimed the right to call himself a bee-master also and understood the craft of the hive. He loved all industries proper to the district and often listened to his mother when she talked of vanished crafts familiar in her early days, but

now grown obsolete. The land itself was Richard's special joy, and if he had an ambition still remaining it centred on the thought of actually possessing a rood or two of his mother country. He would cast his eyes over meadow, woodland, or tilth and speculate as to their possibilities, long to tread them as master, imagine himself as awakening them from their age-old slumbers and realising their promise in his sanguine thoughts.

There was a derelict lime-kiln upon an acre of waste land at Merton which never failed of challenge to Richard. Old Verity could remember when limestone was burned there and the forgotten spot a centre of prosperity, yet her son never succeeded in interesting Merton Magna as to its revival, though he had striven to do so. Now the ground was in the hands of a stranger, and those who knew him assured Challice that the possessor cared nothing for its possibilities.

Another stranded spot also sometimes filled the wheelwright's mind where it stretched in a little vale between the village and the 'Cat and Fiddle' public-house. Here descended an effluent of Exe through marsh lands. It was a boggy region known as Withy Platt—a place once rich in osier beds—and Richard longed to restore its vanished usefulness and plant it again. But he found none to echo these hopeful visions, or supply for any of them the sinews of war. He was a popular man and kindly thought upon by all who knew him, but his dreams found none willing to advance them in the direction of reality. They usually entailed mountains of work, and to shrewder wits than Richard's offered no certainty of any adequate return.

At the 'Cat and Fiddle,' where David Beedell was inn-keeper, and where Challice and his friends were used to end their evenings, younger and astuter men explained that

Richard's ideas belonged to a past period. Mr. Beedell himself illuminated the point.

'What you don't grasp, Dick,' he would say, 'is that new times bring in new manners and customs. To grow withies and burn lime nowadays is out of date. I grant you these things are still done, but they couldn't be revived away from their proper places. To tend Withy Platt and lift it into cultivation might be in the power of a rich man, but never would it pay for an osier bed no more. And as for lime, though we're poor in that respect and I'm so great a believer in it as yourself, yet, along of nitrates and chemistry and such-like, you wouldn't find a market near enough to show you any profits.'

'I'd lead the farmers back to lime,' vowed Richard. 'I'd give it away gratis till their eyes were opened and they found their salvation.'

It was a typical remark, for his dreams were never so much concerned with the wheelwright's personal prosperity as the welfare of the community at large. 'Gratis' was a word very often in Richard's mouth, and those who knew him best not seldom laughed at the contrast between his generous mind and empty pocket.

'Without a doubt,' admitted Mr. Beedell, 'if the good man was rich to-morrow, he'd be poor again the next day.'

There came an evening in early spring when Richard did not go to the inn but smoked his pipe at home with his family and waited to keep an appointment. At nine o'clock he had been bidden to attend at Prospect Place—the uninspired direction of a new dwelling-house half a mile distant from his own; and now his wife speculated as to what this summons might mean.

'Why for should a foreigner like Mr. Pye want you,

Dick ? ' asked Ivy. ' I can't see him calling for any of your feats of cleverness—a town bird like him.'

' I was running it over myself,' he answered. ' But I'm in the dark. It may only be for a bit of information, or again it may be a paid job. He's welcome to anything I can do to serve him naturally. Beedell says he makes a habit of walking to the inn most mornings about noon ; and he'll drink a small beer and smoke his pipe, but don't say much. He's got a friendly disposition, so David Beedell says, and looks at you like a broody hen—quiet and dignified—but keeps his opinions to himself and don't cut into any conversation that may be passing.'

' I often wonder why he came here and built himself that nice house,' said Granny Challice. ' Just for peace and quiet and the view of the river very like. A sign of wisdom in the man.'

' Everything is done very neat and sueant about him,' declared Richard's son, Leonard. ' He's made a flower plot in front and I'll often see him in that planting of apple trees he laid out when he came ; and once—mouching round the old lime-kiln, where I'd set a trap in a rabbit run—I came out on top of him sitting smoking his pipe under the kiln in a lew spot. He told me I was trespassing because the waste land was his ; but he said it quiet like and civil, and I granted he was in the right and promised I wouldn't go there any more. But I do—only stealthier.'

Richard's eyes suddenly shone and hope, ever ready to leap into them, sounded upon his big voice.

' My stars, Mother—what a thing if the gentleman thought to build up the kiln and start the old job !'

' He'd have come to the right one if he did,' answered Verity ; ' but it's little likely. He goes into Susan Mingo's shop-of-all-sorts now and again, for postage stamps and

sundries, and she tells me that he's a retired shopkeeper and a very gentlemanly kind of man. But he's a foreigner—you've always got to mind that—and he wouldn't venture his savings in the country, nor on no doubtful gamble like the dead kiln.'

'Be it as it will, I'll go and see,' said Dick, 'and, if he gives me half a chance, I'll speak to the virtues of slaked lime.'

Then Samson Challice spoke. He was reading the *Western Morning News*, but put it down and pointed at Leonard.

'You bet he's nosed out one of Len's traps and be going to ask you to put the fear of God in him,' he suggested.

They laughed at the suggestion.

'He'd go to Nick Tidy, not me, if it was that,' answered the father, 'him being village policeman.'

'Poor old Nick,' said Leonard. 'He's like me and Sam—wishful to go to Canada and make a name for himself out there.'

'You'll never make a name worth putting on your grave—in Canada, or anywhere else, Len,' said his grandmother; and they laughed again.

Then Richard took his hat and stick and went to see the foreigner.

II.

SIMON PYE MAKES A CHANGE.

Wandering on a lonely holiday, Simon Pye had penetrated East Devon, sat beneath a tree upon a bank to eat his sandwiches, risen to rare heights of imagination and discovered the spot where he would feel well content to end his days. It lay west of Merton Magna, on a bank uplifted over the road, and its first charm consisted of the

view, for beneath, at a distance of no more than two hundred yards, wound the river and stretched wide meadows ablaze with buttercups and sweet with white-thorn that shone above the stream. Red cattle roamed the grasslands and clustered together upon the little beaches of the river; while Exe ran placid and glittering beneath the wanderer's perch and faded away easterly into the misty blue of hills beneath a spring sky.

Here surely, reflected Simon, was such a rural scene as might breed contentment and peace of mind at all seasons of the year. His spirit had been long set on such a spot, but he hoped not much as to its possibilities, because life and experience had alike taught him the futility of taking any mortal thing for granted. He did not even make an extended survey of the lonely dingle and meadow-land behind it, for he judged that in all probability to do so must be waste of time. But the land was certainly private property and he determined to learn as swiftly as possible whether it might lie in his power to secure it.

Simon Pye's story lacked incident and was composed of good and ill fortune, as he held in about the usual proportions. He was a Midland man and had built up a small business in Birmingham. His general store in a poor district proved prosperous and he had worked exceedingly hard to make it. He proceeded on what he believed to be sound lines, gave good value and contented himself with moderate profits. He saved money and, looking forward, always designed to retire and live in the heart of the country when he could afford to do so without care. For many years his wife opposed this ambition and assured him that to cease work would end his interest in life and thereby tend to shorten it. But Simon knew better. He loved the country, always took one fortnight's holiday amid

rural surroundings and understood himself well enough. He rejoiced at all times in reading, and though books did not enter into his business, he was greatly devoted to them and found ample leisure for study. Simon's bent tended towards philosophy, and the circumstances of his private life turned his attention more and more in that direction, because philosophy helped him in the difficulties created by a partner out of sympathy with his character and impatient of his colourless and concentrated existence. She was a Birmingham woman blessed with a little fortune of her own, and she had married Mr. Pye for more reasons than one. She admired his quality, so different from her own, and always counted on enlarging his interests and enjoying life in her own gay fashion after marriage ; but he proved obstinate, demanded utmost simplicity of life and declined to modify his own monotonous methods on her account. At her entreaty he tried the livelier side of their social order and once spent his fortnight's holiday in the Riviera to pleasure her ; but he loathed this jaunt and returned with thankfulness to his business and his books. He was forty when he married and his wife ten years younger. One child they had—a son—and in after time Nora Pye confessed to her intimates that the baby alone served to save the situation and anchor her in her husband's home. She was faithful to him, but they lived their lives much apart and never took their holidays together. Simon strove to bring up the boy according to his ideals ; but his mother opposed the father's methods, adored the handsome child and spoiled him. In youth little Gerald had been fascinating and original. He was a show child and knew it at an early age. Money went to his education and from a preparatory school he proceeded to Rugby. His mother gloried in him ; his father mourned to see no distinguishing trait of

promise in the lad. His mother dreamed of him going upon the stage, for Gerald possessed facial distinction and ample confidence ; but his father very well knew that only discipline and hard work would ever enable Gerald to justify his existence. Had the young man's destiny rested with Simon, he had certainly striven to save him, but as long as his mother lived, the youth danced attendance upon her and wasted his time in empty amusement. His education was wasted and he revealed no inclination to a profession, or the least interest in his father's business.

Then, when the lad was twenty, his mother had died in a motor accident, and the unexpected disaster steadied him for a while. Simon sorrowed but reflected that Nora had enjoyed her days in her own fashion, and though he himself could not satisfy her, he had ever been generous with his money, and added what she desired to her own good means. It had been understood that he would leave her all his money, for there were no other calls upon him, and she had told him that her fortune would be his were she the first to die. With respect to his son, therefore, Simon felt that his mother's untimely end might prove a blessing in disguise, and he designed henceforth to make Gerald his prime thought and care. The event fell otherwise and furnished another illustration of the illusory pleasures of hope. Nora, moved thereto by some experience that had angered her in the past, or possibly convinced that her son, if ever in his father's power, would be faced with conditions unworthy of him, died leaving Gerald her entire fortune when he came of age. Simon had never touched a penny of it, and though his wife from time to time lessened her capital, a substantial sum remained. Within six months of his mother's passing Gerald Pye inherited five hundred pounds a year. Some prevenience, or a lawyer's advice,

had, moreover, brought caution into Nora's will and her son might not touch his capital until attaining the age of thirty. Thus was young Pye independent of Simon and his father's hoped-for control did not exist.

The boy lived at home for a time until he felt his feet, but it was not long before he tasted the pleasures of independence.

Gerald at four-and-twenty might have been cited as the absolute antithesis of his father in every mental and physical particular. He was sociable, vain of unusual good looks, inherently idle and a lover of pleasure. For the most part he looked on at life, because any sort of respectable success demanded the hard work he was not prepared to do ; but he soon discovered a sort of occupation which combined business with pleasure. He loved horse-racing and would take great pains to master the intricacies of the sport with purpose to profit by it. Easy money could be made there as well as lost, and though Gerald had his social ambitions and would not become a bookmaker, he called himself 'a gentleman backer' and in that capacity devoted immense natural energy to a sort of life his father loathed. Simon Pye held gambling the most futile of all vices and had never seen a horse-race in his life. But racing was in the young man's blood—ironically through his father ; for Simon's own parent had been a bookmaker by profession and a highly reputable and honest man in the days when Fred Archer and George Fordham rode.

The Pyes had long drifted apart when Simon ate his sandwiches, sat above Exe and gazed solemnly upon her beauties. He was a rather undersized and unattractive man and his clean-cut and clean-shorn features had grown a little coarse with age ; but his eyes were brown, intelligent and kindly, his forehead broad rather than high, his hair

thick and iron grey. In two years he contemplated retirement, designed to leave his old home and few acquaintances and bury himself in the country. He had long determined upon Devonshire, but as yet, amid the wealth of the West Country's attractions, still remained uncertain. Nor did he propose to build. His dream was some ancient dwelling : yet now, before this challenge, Simon reached as nearly as possible to moments of excitement and he pictured a bungalow upon the knoll, within sound of the river's summer murmurs and winter shouting.

Chance favoured him and, much to his own surprise, there presently appeared a landowner who proved extremely willing to sell some acres of unprofitable earth at a modest figure. Mr. Pye acquired the knoll, a little meadow situate behind it and jungle grown up around the picturesque ruins of the lime-kiln at his rear. He proceeded with good sense and consideration for the surroundings. An artist designed his dwelling of one storey and created a commodious and modest home built of local iron-stone under weathered tiles that offered no outrage to the surrounding scene. Every tree that could be spared stood round about ; the bungalow faced south and beneath it spread those river reaches that rejoiced Simon with their flower-girt peace. Meantime, while his house was abuilding, Simon disposed of his business, and presently took a cottage in Merton Magna and engaged a mother and daughter to attend upon him until his new home should be prepared. He enjoyed the intermediate period much, came and went daily and turned his special attention to the meadow, which was to be transformed into an apple orchard. Mr. Pye never trusted his own scanty understanding of agriculture and in the matter of his young fruit trees had received expert advice and bought a stock of three hundred plants from the

great nurseries in Jersey. Very admirable supplies were forthcoming and he set them up, in hope soon to see the blooth of spring and the harvests of autumn. He had handed their charge and care to a veteran of the village—an ancient man judged to know more about apples than any within the scope of the parish; and now, after two years in companionship with his youthful trees, Simon's heart began to faint and doubt grew massively within it. Under Matthew Sloggett's ministry the apples appeared to lack both heart and vigour in their master's eyes. Though apparently healthy enough, they evinced no desire to get on with the business of growth and not the least anxiety to flower or fruit. He grumbled mildly and was surprised to find that no friendship existed between Mr. Sloggett and his charges. Old Matthew did not like these particular apple trees; indeed, he revealed an inveterate distrust of their promise. The grotesque reason for this aversion presently appeared; but not until Simon had set about to make a change, seek another and a younger man for the laggard orchard and send Matthew Sloggett about his business. Mr. Pye was always deliberate and cautious, and he did not dismiss the ancient man until he had made enquiries and learned of a more promising substitute. He would often go into Susan Mingo's little shop, and it was Susan who had first mentioned Richard Challice to him. Thereupon he investigated the accomplishments of Richard and learned from David Beedell, at the 'Cat and Fiddle,' that Dick invariably won first prizes at the village flower show with his 'Cornish Gilliflowers'—a shy bearer but a noble fruit. So he determined to approach the wheelwright at his forge.

But, when the time came, Simon changed his mind as to a detail and summoned Challice to 'Prospect Place'

instead. He left nothing to chance and desired to avoid any unpleasant clash. He had therefore arranged to see and part from Matthew Sloggett at eight o'clock, and when the unprofitable servant had gone his way, to proceed with the engagement of Mr. Challice an hour later.

The evening came and the men were punctual. Richard, of course, knew nothing as to what might await him, but Matthew entertained grim suspicions that trouble brewed and came in a humour somewhat dour to face it. He did not like his employer and held that Simon lacked both faith in his powers and adequate respect for a man so much older than himself. For Sloggett demanded and expected the deference due to age, though in truth his parts were not such as to invite it. He knew Simon for one much given to books—an attitude that awakened uneasiness combined with contempt, for Matthew held books in no respect, declaring that experience and not learning was the criterion of success upon the land. He thought Simon a hard man and distrusted both him and his apple trees—for one paramount reason that now appeared.

Mr. Pye sat in his veranda smoking a pipe and gazing upon the twilight, as it began to dim the river's reaches and waken a silver fog above the leas. Then came Sloggett, and he was invited to sit down and listen to the reason of his visit. The younger opened with a generalisation. He felt not afraid of Matthew as many did, but knew him for one of small intelligence and crabbed temper ; therefore he planned to be gentle and put him to no needless pain. Simon lacked much understanding as yet of the rustic mind and sometimes discovered that he had hurt when least disposed to do so. The folk would prove callous when he expected them to be touchy and reveal strange sensitiveness for most unexpected reasons.

‘Smoke your pipe and take it easy, Matthew,’ directed the younger. ‘Now it’s a sure thing that knowledge often defeats its object, and I’ve found it work that way with me in many more important matters than apple trees. In a word, the more you think you know about a subject, the less you often really do know. Ever noticed that?’

This was just the sort of vague remark that Sloggett specially detested. He did not understand it and only grunted.

‘We’re a bit too fond of saying a thing can’t happen, because we’ve never seen it happen,’ continued Mr. Pye. ‘We think we’ve got the whole law and the prophets about some matter when, in truth, we have everything still to learn. I make that mistake often, though old enough to know better; so do you. Yet I’ve lived to see things happen that I’d have laughed to scorn in my youth, and so have you. You’re great on experience, but it’s foolish to pit your experience against that of everybody else, because experience is not only a matter of age as you seem to think. It’s a matter of brain-power, Matthew, and men like you and me, with very moderate brain-power, may get less live, working experience in a hundred years than a brighter brain will collect in fifty. You’d say that was fair—come now?’

The old man grunted again, but Simon still delayed to reach the point. An idea had struck him and he voiced it.

‘Modern inventions make me feel tender to the ancient beliefs,’ he said. ‘I mean the folklore and old sayings and old charms that I dig out of ancient folk when I give ’em the time of day on my walks abroad. You ask what I mean by that? Well, suppose I’d been able to tell my grandfather, as I sat upon his knee, that a time was coming when the King’s voice would echo note for note round the world, what would he have done?’

‘Had the doctor to you,’ said Mr. Sloggett.

‘Exactly. And so I never laugh at the old wisdom, or undervalue it; but there’s the new wisdom to be taken into account also.’

‘I know what I know, and that’s enough for me,’ said Matthew.

The opening was too good to ignore and Mr. Pye struck.

‘But it isn’t enough for me, I’m afraid. I don’t question it for a minute. You were looking after apple trees before I was born, no doubt. But nothing stands still—at least nothing ought to stand still, my friend—and the trouble with my orchard—so to call it—is just that: the trees are standing still. So I want to try a bit of new wisdom and find somebody who knows more about ’em than you do.’

The old man glared and his head began violently to nod. At last he spoke.

‘Somebody who knoweth more about apple trees than me! Hell, Master, where is he?’

‘I’ve found him—at least I hope I’ve found him—a younger man with a pinch of the new wisdom.’

Mr. Sloggett received five shillings a week for his services at Prospect Place and had done so during two years. He prepared to make a fight for it.

‘Give heed to me,’ he said, and put his ancient paw upon Simon’s knee. ‘Give heed to what I tell you for God’s love, else you’ll go from weakness to weakness and never live to see the orchard you hanker after. It ain’t the soil, nor yet the lay-out, nor yet the weather that’s in fault to your plot: it’s the trees! Long, long I’ve known where the mischief was, yet couldn’t bring myself to tell you; and I’ve fought for them saplings and sweated for ’em and layed awake by night for ’em days beyond count. For who was I to break it to you, after you’d spent big money

on hundreds of the damn' things, that you might so soon have sunk it in the river ?'

'The trees are the cream of a famous Jersey nursery—a world-renowned nursery, my dear fellow,' explained Mr. Pye, and the other's voice lifted in triumph.

'There you are then ! Jersey ! Foreign—God He knows where—and if there's one thing is vain on our lands it's what come foreign. They may be so world-renowned as you say ; but what's that to our red earth ? Our red earth is world-renowned for wheat and roots and such-like, and no such things be denied by us ; but apples and pears—no ! Devon apples and pears are all we've got a use for here, and where shall you see their partners outside of the county ? But they must be born and bred here and come from the generations and generations that have made us what we are. And when I heard the fatal news that they was foreigners you'd planted in the old ewe-lease, then you could have knocked me down with a feather, Master, because I knew the end from the beginning. But with death in my heart I went at 'em—you'll bear me out there. I've fought for 'em like a father for his childer.'

'I've never seen you fighting very hard,' murmured Simon, his eyes on a lilac light fading over the river. 'However, the past is past and the trees don't look unhealthy in my eyes—merely sulky and down on their luck.'

'They're so healthy as they can be in our climate—thanks to me,' answered Sloggett, 'but they're home-sick. They're foreigners I tell 'e.'

'I'm a foreigner myself, but I'm not home-sick,' replied Simon thoughtfully. 'You see if you were right, Matthew, the only proper course would be to scrap the lot and make a fresh start.'

'If you've got the pluck and money to do it. And I

pray you may have before I'm grown too old to help you, Master.'

'No—they must get another chance. We'll try the new wisdom and see if that's going to save them. I dare say you'll come along sometimes and lend a hand when you can spare the time and keep my little flower garden smart and trim; but the orchard will be in other hands after Lady Day, Matthew.'

The old man rose.

'Then I'll wish you good night,' he said. 'I don't come round here playing at work under some fool young enough to be my grandson. I'll quit at once if you please.'

Mr. Pye looked at his watch. It yet wanted a quarter of an hour before Richard Challice was due and he knew that Sloggett's home lay in the other direction.

'Well, good night, and we'll be friends still, I hope.'

Matthew made a vulgar sound.

'Friendship is as friendship does,' he said, 'and foreigners is as foreigners does seemingly.'

With this stroke he stumped away into the dusk. Then for a time silence reigned in the thickening gloom. A corncrake broke it harshly from the hayfields beneath; a star shone; a salmon splashed in the river.

It grew chilly and Mr. Pye went indoors, turned up his oil lamp and waited for Challice. He was reading when the visitor arrived and stood for the first time in a chamber lined with book-shelves. Richard's eyes opened wide with wonder to see their massed battalions and he voiced surprise in his direct fashion.

'My, sir!' he said. 'Didn't know there was such a lot of books in Merton Magna!'

'You're welcome to borrow when you please if you like reading,' answered Simon. 'I haven't read 'em all myself

yet, but there's more to them than the newspaper in my experience. Sit down.'

He described his need.

'Have you ever cast your eye over my plantation of apple trees, Challice?' he began.

'I have, sir. Apples is my hobby in a manner of speaking and I grow a few in my little plot. It holds seven cordon trees.'

'They tell me that you always get first prize for your fruit.'

'I've been lucky, Master. Not much competition in our little show.'

'And what did you think of my trees?'

'They are very nice, stuggy young trees—just what I'd choose for planting myself—good stuff and full of vigour; but—well, I don't want to say a word against old Matthew, you understand, because you trust the trees to him.'

'Never mind him, Challice.'

'He's known for a very understanding man and he counts you for a tower of strength, of course; but I'd say, without a slur on Sloggett, that he might be a thought behind the times—natural at his age.'

'He left me before you came,' said Mr. Pye.

'I passed him up-along, Master.'

'Just what I didn't want to happen. I thought he lived the other way.'

'He does so,' admitted Richard, 'but he was going to the pub. no doubt. He was chattering to himself; and when he chitters, you know he's troubled. He didn't mark me.'

'He's gone to tell his friends that I'm a scoundrel, I expect,' said Simon.

'Never, Master!'

‘Well, I’m a foreigner, and that’s very near as bad in Sloggett’s opinion. How long do you need to stop in a place before you cease to be a foreigner, Challice?’

The wheelwright laughed.

‘You’d want to bide here for a generation or two before you was counted anything else,’ he explained. ‘The young folk would know you from their cradlehood and you’d be a common object of the countryside to them, sir; but a foreigner to the rest.’

‘Very interesting. I must support it as best I can. And now be frank about my trees. I may tell you that Matthew has given up all hope.’

‘Why? Why does he say that?’

‘They are foreigners—wandering, way-lost creatures in a strange land and climate, and therefore doomed to failure.’

Richard roared loudly. ‘You don’t ordain to let him hold down his job?’

‘For the sound reason that he can’t. I never denied him anything and he’s doomed the trees from the first apparently and not stirred a finger to them, and waited to see ’em die, and taken five shillings a week for his fun. He’s gone. I offered him lighter work—to look after the flower garden and keep me tidy. He won’t take that. He was rude. I’m sorry, but so it is. He ought to retire and rest on his faded laurels. Will you come for five shillings a week? And if the trees are shouting for food, they’d better have it at once. I’ll pay for what labour you want.’

‘I’ll come gladly,’ replied Richard. ‘But there’s lots to do before the feeding. Too late for that now till autumn. Then I’ll dress ’em proper. I’ll start with the wire so soon as you’re pleased to order it.’

‘You can order it and get a spot of commission,’ declared

Simon. 'I'm going to trust you entirely. I've found in my life that we can trust people more than we're apt to do.'

'I'd say we was mostly trustable round these parts,' answered Richard. 'And that's how I feel about your trees at the minute, Master. Now I'll go over 'em, as a paid servant to 'em, and report what I pick up at close study. But a child could see they were hearty, healthy young stuff. If you never touched 'em they'd make good on their own in twenty years' time; but, of course, you want to get a move on to 'em.'

He rose to go, but Mr. Pye rather liked Richard and bade him sit down again.

'We'll drink on it,' he answered. 'Now tell me about yourself and your business. Very interesting work?'

Richard expanded under this friendly greeting. He joined Simon in some whiskey and water and detailed his craft and his family history, while Simon listened and encouraged him until the visitor became quite confidential. Indeed, Challice felt no less trust in his fellow-men than Mr. Pye himself professed.

'I always thought how wonderful to have a few acres of ground of your very own and still think so,' he said.

'A common hunger in some countries,' explained Simon. 'In France, for instance. They tell me that the country people there love a bit of land better than their souls. But you don't find it in England so much. Our system's different and the folk aren't brought up to own, so they seldom dream of doing so.'

'I do,' confessed Richard. 'It always seems to me a most wonderful thing, Master.'

'So it seemed to me—till I got a few acres,' answered the other, 'then it wasn't wonderful at all.'

'My sons are all for leaving England and taking up virgin

land and building a property at the ends of the earth ; but that ain't for them, and I doubt if they'd shine at such tremendous hard work even did the chance come.'

'Young men dream dreams and see visions,' replied Simon. 'There's another side to pioneers' work, however. I know, because I was a pioneer myself—not in virgin forests, but a Birmingham back street. To make something out of nothing wants staying-power, Challice, and good health before all else.'

'One of my boys dreams dreams and sees visions,' declared Richard, who had been caught by the phrase ; 'but they don't get him forwarder.'

'I suppose not.'

Presently the wheelwright spoke of Mr. Pye's ruined lime-kiln.

'I thought when it went round you'd bought the rough copse and the old kiln, that you might be minded to burn lime, sir,' he said. 'There's a shining prospect there for any who'd face up to it.'

'No, I don't think to do that. The rough ground ended off my acres and I liked the look of it. I was and am very ignorant about wild nature and I thought a place like that would teach me a lot. And it has for that matter. But I'm rather tired of nature now. Things must be robbing and killing each other all the time, and you hear birds and beasts screaming by night. Not nice, that.'

Richard stared. Such familiar experiences had never troubled him.

'Coming from a town, I dare say you found matters to jar you till you were used to them,' he said.

'As you would, if you went to a town. But reading quiets the mind and calms it down. I'm very interested in what I hear round about, because in a place like this you

feel nearer to the peace and quiet of the past than you can in a city, where the present is always banging at your door with all its new inventions.'

Richard felt inspired with an idea.

'I do believe that you'd win a bit of pleasure out of my old mother, sir,' he said. 'She's gipsy born, but she's lived in our old cottage for half a century and is full of old-world stuff. Her memory's clear yet and she's a most downright old woman and smokes a pipe.'

'Sounds my sort,' said Mr. Pye. 'I've heard of her for that matter from Miss Mingo at the shop.'

'If you was to do her the honour of paying her a visit some day, you'd see if Mother took your fancy,' suggested Richard. 'You mightn't like her perhaps. A plenty don't, along of her directness of speech, but she knows scores of funny old stories and happenings, when the people held to a lot more than they hold to now.'

'I'll come and smoke a pipe with her one afternoon,' promised Simon. 'Such things are worth noting down if you're serious-minded, else when the old intelligencers drop out, they'll be lost for all time.'

They talked a little longer and then the visitor bade Mr. Pye 'good night' and went on his way elated. He had won the promise of an amiable employer disposed to friendship, and friendship in any sort always found him quick to welcome it.

III.

SHOP-OF-ALL-SORTS.

Susan Mingo was a survival from a vanishing day, yet knew it not, for, by a blessing of nature, no warning instinct exists to toll the melancholy fact into any of our ears. Life flowed on and the business of the post office and her little

store flowed with it. Her father had administered his dual task with dignity and success, and she followed in his footsteps. She could hear him now singing 'Hark, hark the lark !' as he tripped from one side of his establishment to the other ; and sometimes, though he had been dead ten years, she came upon his writing on card-board boxes and sighed a little. She liked to think his ghost was at her right hand still, as she had been at his when he taught her to telegraph and sell stamps, and it seemed to her on quiet days, when nothing much was doing, that she could still hear 'Hark, hark the lark !' booming down thinly from that exalted place where doubtless now he still sang it at his celestial tasks.

One side of Miss Mingo's shop was sacred to affairs of state and, as she said, you could smell post office instantly the moment you turned your nose in that direction ; but the limitations of the establishment were such that less austere odours were apt to drift through the intervening atmosphere and sully the subtler aroma diffused by stamps and official literature. Miss Mingo's pride was to stock nothing that could possibly languish or go shop-soiled on her hands. A lifetime of experience had taught her what to avoid, and though her instincts often tempted her, she seldom fell. Even at Christmas-time she laid in little that was merely meretricious, or unlikely to go off. She respected the seasons and prepared for each in turn. Nor were the lighter festivities of the passing year neglected. Masks and squibs and crackers appeared on the last days of October ; and on May Day she blossomed with attractive draperies.

But the backbone of the emporium was food, and since the taste of the folk in food changes not, everything quite sure to be demanded awaited the customer. Such material was treated with utmost respect, protected, carefully guarded

against contamination, set as far from the ironmongery and drapery as possible, shrouded alike from the public gaze and the village flies of summer. Her tortoise-shell cat controlled this department by night and slept in the midst of it by day. Miss Mingo had known as many as four dead mice awaiting her inspection of a morning sometimes, and would laud the slayer when he lifted his green eyes for applause.

Into the shop one afternoon came Ivy Challice to buy her son, Leonard, a pair of socks, and her son, Samson, a pair of braces. The purchases were swiftly made, but Ivy stopped to talk. She was rather elated at an event of the immediate future and, though usually impassive and unemotional to a curious degree, could waken up if interested.

‘Mr. Pye’s coming to have a tell with Granny Challice this afternoon,’ she said. ‘He’s took to Dick and he’s never seen a woman smoke a pipe and be very wishful to do so. All for new experiences, Mr. Pye is ; and when he hears tell of anything, he sets it down in a little pocket-book.’

Susan was grey and birdlike, weak-eyed, gentle-voiced and apt for laughter.

‘The only dark thing about Verity Challice is her pipe,’ she said. ‘For sense there never was such another. And Mr. Pye’s a very nice man indeed, Ivy. He’ll often come in for this or that and pass the time of day.’

She laughed at a recollection.

‘Gave me a lot of clever hints he did and praised my place. Said he was in much the same line of business himself, only on a larger scale. First time he came in was for a black-lead. And I rummaged ’em out and caught sight of my dear father’s writing on the old box and went fainty. Though it’s all these years and years since he went on, I still go fainty when I come on his writing.’

‘Fancy!’ said Mrs. Challice.

‘Yes, and I had to sit down and hold my heart, and Mr. Pye asked what was wrong and I told him, and he was most understanding and said a good father was a blessed memory, and waited for me to get right.’

As she spoke Simon Pye himself entered. He already knew them both.

‘I’ll trouble you for some matches, Miss Mingo,’ he said, ‘and I wish you sold tobacco. I’ve been buying some first-rate Virginian for Mr. Challice’s mother and I had to go down to the “Cat and Fiddle” for it.’

Susan laughed.

‘Mr. Beedell would never forgive me, sir, if I was to store tobacco. Live and let live’s our motto.’

‘There are few practise that good old saying now,’ he answered, and gazed about him. ‘You’ve taken my advice over the bacon and butter, I see. Find it work easier for you?’

‘I do, sir. ’Tis a lot more successful,’ acknowledged Susan.

‘Wonderful shop,’ he said, ‘a lesson in using space.’

‘Vicar was in but this morning,’ answered the little merchant. ‘Wanted a pair of brown shoe-laces and a quick-death mousetrap. Doubted I’d have ’em, but I had ’em both! “Most compendious, most compendious, Miss Mingo,” he said to me, and I thanked him, but didn’t know the use of the word. What might it mean, sir?’

‘Much in little,’ answered Simon, ‘a very good name for your shop.’

Susan made a confession.

‘Not but what I’d hanker for more room sometimes,’ she told him. ‘Off and on, when I sit in the church, I picture a shop laid out there, like they Stores to Redchester city, and,

God forgive me, my mind roams over the aisles and I see a proper emporium and fill the pews with dry goods on one side and wet goods t'other and hardware down the middle. But one didn't ought to bring business into worship and I feel shame afterwards.'

Simon departed and Susan praised him.

'He don't look a kindly man,' said Ivy, 'but Dick says that frown on his face and his underhung jaw means no light on his character. He's mild at heart and not very much of a fighter by his nature.'

'You trust Granny to size him up,' answered Susan. 'Along of her long life she's got a great judgment for any person's character.'

'She's got a great art to see the worst of 'em,' answered Mrs. Challice. 'A most impatient woman, I'd say. Never understood me, nor yet my sons. But we bend to the blast—for my husband's sake. He sets a lot of store by her. A carping old woman. I never can see what he sees in her.'

'She's downright,' said Miss Mingo. 'For downrightness you won't find her equal.'

'You can be a lot too downright,' explained Ivy. 'She don't hurt me, because I let her talk flow in one ear and out the other; but she'll make my sons smart sometimes. She hasn't got no sympathy with their opinions and their cleverness to want a bigger life and go foreign.'

Meantime Mr. Pye proceeded to Church Cottage and, as he went, ran into old Sloggett. They had not met since Matthew's dismissal and he scowled under his wrinkled forehead and was stumping by. But he carried something very unusual and Simon, always a learner, ventured to ask the reason.

'Good afternoon, Matt.,' he said amiably enough. 'And what have you there?'

Matthew was bearing a big black toad in an old bird cage. He hesitated, but declined any information.

'Tis my affair—you wouldn't understand,' was all he answered; while Mr. Pye gazed thoughtfully after him.

'No doubt that toad is going to be put to some purpose,' he reflected, and presently, when he sat with old Verity Challice, raised the question.

She herself came to the door at his knock, for she was alone in the house. But she had made ready for the occasion and donned her best gown, her agate brooch and her golden gipsy earrings. Her scanty hair was covered by a black indoor bonnet, and she wore three odd old rings upon her fingers as well as her wedding ring.

Simon spoke on general subjects after praising Richard and declaring his enjoyment at the wheelwright's energy.

'A very fine man, your son, Mrs. Challice,' he said. 'I know work when I see it and like to watch him. He'll do more in an evening hour than many of the young fellows can tackle in a day.'

'Yes, that's true; and you want for to see me smoke my pipe, so I will smoke my pipe,' she answered. ''Tis loaded ready.'

Simon listened with good appetite and Verity, elated at such unusual attention, forgot all about her pipe. But presently the visitor raised a personal question and expressed a hope that Mrs. Challice might help him in the matter of a maid.

'My housekeeper's stopping,' he said, 'only her girl is to be married and leave me. I want somebody to be described as house and parlour maid under the command of Mrs. Butters. She won't have to do any cooking.'

Verity reflected.

'I'd pleasure Mary Bidlake for her mother's sake, though

not particularly for her own,' she answered. 'She hasn't seen service, but her mother's a widow with six and very wishful to get Mary off her hands. You find yourself like that sometimes—willing to advance somebody you don't like for the sake of somebody you do like.'

'What's wrong with the girl?'

'She's pretty to look at and as sly as a fitch.¹ Comely to the eye and pleasing to the ear, but full of craft. The sort of maid would listen at keyholes and look at private letters.'

'I see—just ordinary,' said Simon, who was cynical as to feminine curiosity, 'but I wouldn't choose her, ma'am.'

'You lose your trust in the young as you get well forward in the seventies,' confessed Verity. 'I may be hard on Mary, though I've got her own mother's word that she's downy and given to secrets. I wonder how you'd like my granddaughter, Dick's girl. She's a professed housemaid and only leaving the Wilderness House because the general's dead and for no fault. It would be a masterpiece of convenience for Linda if you saw your way to her, because then she'd keep close to me and her father. It ain't for me to push her on to you, but you could ask her mistress as to her character, sir. Nothing nosy about Linda. A good, fearless piece and a towser for work.'

'Just the right one by the sound of her—if your son would like it.'

'He'd like it, and another would like it. That's Dick's man, John Caryl. He's by way of courting Linda and a faithful fashion of man; but you needn't be afraid she'll take him and leave you to want another, because I happen to know under the rose she never will take him.'

'If she's got your son's cheerful qualities and wouldn't think my home too small after a grander sort of place,

¹ Fitch: Weasel.

I doubt not I should be glad to have her,' answered Simon.

Thus two kindly people in sublime ignorance sealed the fate of Ethelinda Challice and, all unwitting, spread a future bed of thorns for that happy young woman.

Mr. Pye agreed to see the girl and her grandmother was quietly gratified.

'They think I'm past my usefulness,' she said, 'but, when they hear tell about this stroke for the family, they'll know different.'

IV.

THE GIFT.

Mr. Pye approved of Ethelinda, though he felt some measure of uneasiness at employing such a remarkably handsome young woman; but what was more important, she approved of him and only went in doubt concerning her wages. He suggested forty-five pounds a year, and as this was five pounds more than she had ever earned, Linda accepted the terms. Her father had sung Simon's praises very heartily, and though she knew that Richard's enthusiasms were apt to end in disappointment, she felt no fears and presently went to her new task happily enough. It was a lighter place than the last and she found agreeable leisure to spend for the most part with her family. Granny Challice had received her meed of applause and learned through Dick that Mr. Pye was grateful to her for her suggestion. Perhaps only Linda's mother felt secretly not satisfied. She well knew the girl for a beauty, and though Linda looked not far ahead, Ivy was wont to dream of the possibilities attaching to her daughter's unusual gifts. Romantic in her cold-blooded way, Mrs. Challice had hoped

that the girl might find her next employment at the neighbour city, and there come into touch with a prosperous suitor and a good match. She felt that if properly managed, Linda might well make some sensation and deplored the fact that she seemed so indifferent to her own promise. For the young woman was not ambitious and not vain. Her father represented her first interest. Indeed, she was old-fashioned in her affections and as yet the thought of marriage had not troubled her. She knew many young men, but none awakened more than friendly interest. Best indeed she liked John Caryl, because Richard Challice thought very well of him; but while satisfied with his attentions and his attitude to life, she found him awaken no tender thought and was at this moment considering how best to let John know he wasted his time. Hints were utterly thrown away on him, and Linda began to fear the approaching task would need to be entrusted to her father.

Granny Challice abounded in surprising utterances and there came a day when she announced a wish that astonished her family. She had hoped that Mr. Pye would soon return 'for a tell,' but as yet he had made no effort in that direction, being engaged about his affairs and rejoicing in solitary tramps through the days of another June. Now the old woman desired his company again and told Richard that he must come.

'Ask the man to tea and be done with it,' she said. 'I like him and he likes me—you always know if anybody likes you, because it happens so seldom. Tell him I'm wishful for him to drink a dish of tea along with me. He can but say "no."'

'He'll think you're cadging for another tin of tobacco,' suggested Leonard Challice. 'You're a deep one, Granny, and no doubt he found that out.'

'No, he won't,' she answered; 'he ain't like you, Len. He's straight, and he very well knows I'm straight. Shop people and gipsies always know who they can do and who they can't do. It's their business to try it on. But you can't do Mr. Pye.'

'He'd come without a doubt, Mother,' said Richard, 'but he might reckon it was taking advantage of him.'

'Why?' asked Verity.

'I couldn't tell you for why,' he answered, 'but—class is class.'

'He's gentry,' suggested Samson Challice.

'Oh no, he isn't,' explained Ivy. 'He's a retired shop-keeper. Only that. He told Susan Mingo he'd kept a shop himself same as hers, only bigger.'

'He's not gentry nor nothing like 'em,' admitted Verity, 'but he's a gentleman. You can be the gentry and not a gentleman by a long shot. He's just a gentleman, so all's said as to that. He don't pretend nothing, and if you don't pretend nothing, then you're a gentleman.'

They questioned this definition and argued the point, but Granny Challice was insistent and Richard at length promised to invite Mr. Pye to tea.

'Let the man name his own day,' said Verity, 'then he can't get out of it. Not that he'll want to do anything like that. I've got a dollop of stories for him and he'll take it kindly you'll find.'

The invitation was duly given and Simon made no trouble about accepting it. Indeed, he declared himself much gratified and named a day, but told Richard that any other would suit him equally well. He came and they found him amiable and interested in their experiences. He praised Ethelinda to Ivy and vowed that he had not oftener seen a prettier girl. He ate heartily of the meal provided, applauded

the cake and asked questions concerning the butter, which he found better than his own.

Simon went a little lame, for he had twisted his ankle getting over the 'Ghost Stile' by the river, and Verity, on hearing of the accident, was able to tell him of a certain cure.

'The hand of a new-born babe will heal a sprain instantler,' she said.

Presently the visitor questioned Leonard as to his interests ; but could not get much out of him, for he was very shy.

'He's like me, sir,' said Ivy, 'most wishful to go foreign. We feel a call that way, me and my sons ; but of course it can't be, because Dick couldn't go away to a new country and begin all over again, though wheelwrights are in great demand, so they say.'

'Your husband thinks there are good openings for industry nearer home, Mrs. Challice,' replied Simon. 'A most observant man.'

'Too hopeful as I always tell him, sir,' answered Ivy.

'The old kiln, now. He feels very sure that it could be revived to good purpose for burning lime. And there's Withy Platt—he tells me that good money might be made with the osiers in skilled hands.'

Richard Challice and his son, Samson, now joined the tea-party and found Simon well content with his entertainment. The talk ranged over local subjects and Mr. Pye showed no eagerness to be gone. Indeed, he lighted his pipe presently and set himself to win the friendship of the young men. He had ere now taken a great personal liking to Richard and found himself interested in the man and well satisfied to be in his company. There was something about the cheerfulness and goodwill that Dick displayed which touched the disillusioned spirit of Simon, and he found in the wheelwright's attitude to life matter

for mild admiration. Mr. Pye marvelled at the younger's optimism, but it touched him and he rather envied a bent of mind capable of such steadfast hope. He would check Richard sometimes and strive to waken philosophic doubts, but he never succeeded; while on the other hand he was occasionally amused to find Dick's sanguine speculations capable of creating a transitory cheerfulness in himself. Not many things amused Simon, but Richard did entertain him and he found in the man and his mother a measure of genuine interest. Indeed, there now awakened in his mind an impulse to serve this new acquaintance and surprise him; but as yet he had not mentioned this friendly purpose. Mr. Pye in truth designed a gift, which was not going to leave him any the poorer, but which he now understood Richard well enough to know would mightily enrich him. As yet he kept silent about the matter, weighing in his cautious fashion whether the proposed present was really calculated to serve the wheelwright, or whether it might only grow into a source of vexation and trouble to him.

He reflected once more upon this problem, while he sat and listened to Verity. Seeing that Simon attended to her recollections, her family did the like, and Granny, conscious of being in the centre of the stage, excelled herself. Mr. Pye felt gently moved at the warmth of his welcome.

'Come again,' begged Granny. 'You come and see me, Master, when the rest of 'em be out of the way, and I'll call home another song or two, as I doubt anybody's left to sing in the world but me.'

He accepted her invitation.

'Gladly I will come. My son is to pay me a visit shortly,' said Simon, 'but I don't expect him to stop very long. He's a sporting man and this will be a new world to him. I haven't seen him for some years—we don't often meet.'

Verity remembered that he had once spoken slightly of his son, but said nothing about that.

He shook hands with all of them deliberately and thanked them for giving him such a pleasant afternoon. Then he turned to Richard and told him that he wanted a word or two. They went out together. The events of the afternoon had decided Mr. Pye to speak. 'I've never given anything away that I wanted to keep,' he said, 'and so I've never been any the poorer for a gift. But rightly speaking, Dick, a gift is no gift if the giver doesn't find himself the poorer for it. To give away what you don't want and won't miss, whether it's time, money, or goods, is nothing. But I was never a giver and I'm too old to reform in that matter.'

'A man's always got something to give, if he's worth calling a man,' answered Challice. 'If it's only a spot of sense or a bit of time, you can always find them will be the better for it, Master. And I'm sure you don't deny your sense to anybody.'

'Sense is cheap,' answered Simon. 'And few things command less gratitude. And now I'm going to follow my mean rule, Dick, and give away something I haven't got the least use for. I don't want the ruin and I don't want the thicket and I don't want the ground under them. But I've heard you say that a bit of Devon earth for your own would delight you, and if you like this patch, I'll sign it over to you and you can call it yours.'

'You mustn't do it, sir! You don't know what you're saying,' vowed the wheelwright. 'This fine spot of ground will be worth two hundred pounds if ever Merton was to grow a bit; and then a builder would give you all that for it, if not more.'

'I've no wish to see Merton grow, and that's the only

condition, Richard. You mustn't sell again and you mustn't put up cottages. For the rest, you can do as you please.'

'Great Powers, Master! My very own ground?'

'Your very own, and much good may it do you,' said Simon. 'Now I'm going home and you can pad your property awhile if you're in a mind to.'

'Never was such a deed done in my knowledge,' declared the younger man. 'I can't pay you, nor nothing like it; but I'll never forget such a wonder, and I'll never turn a clod but what I thank you—and—and—you can look to me for your potatoes and early vegetables and such-like for evermore, Master.'

'Make no such matter of it,' begged Mr. Pye. 'You're doing me a service by taking it. I want nature "red in tooth and claw" pushed a bit farther off, Richard. Time was when I liked poking about there, but not now. Nature's better at a distance—like a good many other people. When you get to close quarters, you find a lot to shock you. Good night. I'll have the deed of gift drawn next week.'

'First thing I'll do will be to build you a good sizable wood stack for next winter's firing,' said Challice, whose mind now hummed with details. 'You'll be my first thought now I'm a man of property, Master.'

Then he was left alone with his riches, and felt that he must be dreaming and feared every moment would bring him awake again. He tramped about in the failing dusk, but listened not to the song of the birds, marked not the beauty of the sunset light on thorn and wild rose and honeysuckle. In his mind he already saw his ground clear and clean; but that was a minor matter. The kiln drew him like a magnet and he trampled round it, poked and pried into the pile as he had often done before and pictured it restored, crowned with the sour vapour of calcining stone,

crackling cheerfully under layers of coal and mineral, pouring out hundreds of tons of lime to enrich the countryside. The sun was long set and grey twilight thickened. Rabbits moved and an owl hooted over Richard's head, but he sat on, and through the web of his thoughts, returning again and again, came the tremendous knowledge that this delectable point of earth was his own with all its promise and infinite possibility. And each time he remembered it, he remembered Mr. Pye.

‘What a man !’ he kept saying over and over again, for it takes a generous spirit to appreciate generosity. The stingy cannot.

(To be continued.)

THE SEPULCHRE OF CHRIST.

BY ARCHER CUST.

EASTER in Jerusalem is the season of High Festival. It is the occasion of the great Moslem celebration of Nebi Musa, when the masses of the Faithful pour into the Holy City from the hill villages and desert encampments to enjoy a week of feasting and revelling, with a pleasant savouring of political argument. It is also the time of the Jewish Passover, when the symbolism of the Exodus is re-enacted in the family feast of the Seder. And it is the season when Christian men and women of every race and every creed gather to share with each other the joy of the triumph of the Resurrection, when for a while life goes back two thousand years and, as then, man greets his neighbour with the glad words — ‘Christ is Risen!’

The imposing offices that commemorate the story of the Passion, the Washing of the Feet, the Calvary Procession and the grand culminating ceremony of the Holy Fire, are held in the historic Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is built over the traditional sites of Golgotha and the Tomb. Some reject these as the true sites. There is the uncertainty as to the alignment of the Jewish City wall: for the one known fact about the location of Golgotha and the Tomb is that, following the accepted Roman and Jewish usage, they must have been situated outside the gates. Here archæology has hitherto not been able to provide any conclusive evidence. To others, the propinquity of the two sites, both being comprised under one building, seems suspiciously convenient: but the Gospel tells us that the

garden, in which Joseph of Arimathea had prepared his tomb, was 'in the place where He was crucified.' There is a preconceived notion too that the Crucifixion took place on an eminence—here we think of Mrs. Alexander's well-known line—'There is a green hill far away.' But we are told no more than that it was '*the place* of a skull.' Thus it has come about that many, particularly of the Anglican persuasion, accept the alternative sites that lie a short distance north of the present Damascus Gate, known as the Garden Tomb and Gordon's Calvary. General Gordon, visiting Jerusalem shortly before his last return to Egypt, recognised this rounded hillock, with the two indentations on its southern face, as the true 'place of a skull.' The historicity of the sites of Calvary and the Sepulchre present a problem that, it seems, must ever remain undecided; and in truth the argument is of little moment compared with the fact that for sixteen centuries the Holy Sepulchre that we know to-day has been to the Christian world the visible centre of its belief, on whose account millions have braved the perils of land and sea and whole cataracts of human lives have been poured out in massacre and in war. Now, at last, what the Crusaders sought in vain to accomplish has come about and the Shrines of Calvary and the Resurrection lie secure in the guardianship of a Christian Power.

Few buildings in the world can look back on so chequered a history as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Its approach tells of its turbulent past. The *parvis* in front of the entrance is entered by two gates, provided with heavy doors. Around are broken bases and columns, themselves probably taken from earlier buildings, that were once part of the twelfth-century Hospital of the Knights of St. John. Of the two great portals, one is closed, having been walled up by Saladin to facilitate the control of the crowds of his Christian

subjects and of the foreign pilgrims at the time of the great festivals. By the entrance is the tombstone of an English Crusader Knight, Philip d'Aubigny, who was tutor to Henry III, Governor of Guernsey and one of the signatories of Magna Carta. His vow accomplished, he died in Jerusalem in A.D. 1236, and his bones were laid as near as possible to his earthly journey's end.

The present façade, as indeed the general lay-out of the building, dates from the period of the Crusades. It was, however, Constantine the Great who first enclosed the sites of Calvary and the Resurrection, destroying the pagan Temple of Venus that Trajan had built, and erecting over the former the Basilica of the Martyrion and over the latter the Shrine of the Anastasis.

Constantine was the last Emperor to make the name of Rome great. He realised that Christianity had become a force with which the power of Rome, already showing signs of enfeeblement, would have to reckon and that it would be politic to secure to his throne the support of the Christians in the Empire. So he determined to catch their imagination and win their loyalty by erecting over the sites that they held in deep reverence as being connected with the life on earth of the Founder of their Faith, and in particular over the traditional site of His Sepulchre, buildings that would bring both fame to his name and honour to their religion. An element of the miraculous was introduced by the journey, conducted with much pomp and ceremony, to the Holy Land of his mother, the Empress Helena, for the discovery of the True Cross, to which it was announced she had been guided in a vision.

A letter from the Emperor to Macarius, the Bishop of Jerusalem, has survived in which he states his wish that a Basilica finer than any in the whole world should be built

over the spot where the monument of the Passion, hidden for so many years, had been rediscovered. From the stories of the early travellers that have come down to us, we can imagine how magnificent Constantine's fane must have been, not only in its general plan and design, but also in the detail of its decoration and adornment. It lasted for some three hundred years before, in common with the other Christian edifices in the country, it was laid waste by the fierce hordes of the Persian King, Chosroes II. Little now remains of the original structure ; in the adjoining Russian Convent and in a timber-store next door the lower strata of part of the Eastern wall of the Martyrion, including traces of two of the great doors, are preserved, and possibly the Byzantine columns that form part of the ambulatory of the present church may have belonged to the northern colonnade of the great open Court in which Constantine's shrines were set.

The invaders did their work well. For three days the Holy City was given over to murder and rapine, and the relic of the True Cross was carried off. The Persian King, however, had a Christian wife, and soon the Christians who had been spared obtained permission to rebuild their Church. This restoration, which was directed by the Patriarch Modestus, seeing that it was carried out from local resources alone cannot have approached the magnificence of the Emperor's work. It is indeed doubtful whether the Martyrion was rebuilt at all ; but the Anastasis over the Tomb was restored and one or two smaller shrines were added. Scarce, however, had the voices of praise and thanksgiving been heard again before the rededicated altars, when there appeared at the gates the Peril from the Desert, the multitude of Islam. Headed by their white-haired Patriarch Sophronius, the anxious Christians gathered at the entrance, praying that

a new disaster might be averted from them and from their beloved building. Their prayers were answered, for they saw the miracle that they had scarce dared to hope for happen before their eyes.

As the swarthy warriors of the Crescent approached, they halted as if held back by an unseen force. At last the Caliph himself, Omar, the successor of the Prophet, arrived. The Church he saw was beautiful ; he remembered, too, that Mohammed had enjoined that the Christians were ' Kitabi,' that is ' people of the Book,' worshippers of the True God but in the wrong way, and that therefore they should be treated with generosity. So he stretched out his hand to the aged Patriarch and took his flock and their Church under his protection.

For four hundred years Modestus's Church survived. Pilgrimages were resumed and on the whole the lot of the Christians under their Arab lords was tolerable. The world was emerging from the Dark Ages ; the Moslem East basked in the shining splendour of the Court of Harun-al-Rashid, while in the West Charlemagne was laying the foundations of our European civilisation. These two great Princes knew and admired each other, and as a gage of goodwill, the Moslem sent to the Christian (together with, it is curious to read, his only elephant, Abu-Labubah, ' Father of Intelligence') the keys of the Holy Sepulchre.

But the most fearful visitation of all was yet to come. About the time of the first millennium A.D., Egypt lay under the rule of one of the strangest characters in history, the mad Fatimite Caliph, El Hakem. He founded a new religion, that is to-day represented by the sect of the Druzes, of which he appointed himself the divinity, and then set out to destroy all and everything in his reach that did not bow the knee before him. The full blast of his mad fury fell on Jerusalem.

The sacred shrines were razed, so that they could scarcely be identified. An attempt was even made to cut away all traces of the Tomb, but tradition relates that no chisel could make an impression on the sacred rock. Then suddenly the Caliph appears to have repented of his madness, and leave was granted to the Patriarch Nikephorus for the Christian offices to be resumed amid the fallen columns and shattered cloisters. The glad tidings were carried to Byzantium and the Emperor Monomachus, at the price it is said of the release of several thousand Moslem prisoners of war, made it possible for the work of rebuilding to begin. The Anastasis, the Golgotha Chapel, and some of the shrines were rebuilt: but they were only the restoration of a restoration, a poor reminder of the glorious original.

It seemed now that the prayers for the peace of Jerusalem would at last be answered. But it was not to be. From the restless heart of Central Asia, there burst over the borderlands of the Empire and over the decaying Persian and Abbassid Kingdoms the greatest blight in history, the Grand Devastator, the Turk. Hordes of these savages overwhelmed Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine. Their galleys swept the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and threatened the Imperial City itself. They did not, however, visit the Holy City with the destruction that was feared. Rather, like their successors in later days, they saw in the Christians an excellent prey for extortion and a profitable source of revenue.

The accounts which have been preserved of pilgrimages of this epoch all tell the same tale of robbery and insult and of the oppression which the devoted servants of the Sepulchre suffered at the hands of their Turkish overlords. The pilgrims' tales profoundly moved a world that was already ill at ease. As the first millennium after Christ approached, the young civilisations of the West were terrified by presages

of the impending end of the world. Their forebodings were strengthened by the widespread misery and famine that characterised the close of the tenth century. So deep was the conviction that the world was on the brink of chaos that even official documents opened with the doom-laden phrase, '*appropinquante termino mundi.*' The fateful year passed, but the terror only revived in an intensified form as the thousandth anniversary of the Crucifixion approached. When at length the clouds lifted, in their gratitude and relief men vowed themselves in service to God, who had thus in His mercy spared the world. A passionate enthusiasm for the pilgrimage to Jerusalem seized upon high and low, rich and poor; even women and children now left their all to take the Cross.

Among the pilgrims who succeeded about the year 1092 in making their way back to France was a poor hermit, by name Peter, a native of Amiens. According to the traditional story, Christ had appeared to him in a vision as he slept exhausted by the Tomb and bade him hasten home and call those who believed on Him to rescue His City and His Tomb from its desolation. So Peter became the apostle of the Crusades. The Pope Urban II, doubtless having an eye to the political situation, for he had inherited the struggle between the Papacy and the Kings of Germany, gave a ready ear to Peter's cause, and at the Council of Clermont in November, 1095, he summoned the chivalry of France to cross the seas and wrench the sacred soil from the power of the Infidel. Urban's call to the Crusade acted like magic on his hearers: with the cry '*Deus Vult,*' that became the watchword of the Crusaders, they pressed forward to enlist in the sacred service, receiving their commission from the Pope's own hand. The enthusiasm spread like a fire all over France and Italy, into Sicily and along the Rhine-

land, and even into this country, and by the ensuing winter the advance guard, led by Peter himself, of the First Crusade had got under way.

This is not the place to tell the story of that great host, of its sufferings and vicissitudes as it lumbered through the Balkans, harassed by the savage Hungarians and the treacherous Bulgarians ; past Constantinople, where the horrors of two centuries later were only avoided by the refusal of Godfrey de Bouillon to bear arms against brother Christians ; through Asia Minor, where the Turks barred the way until, with the miraculous aid of St. George, they were defeated at Dorylaeum ; down the Syrian coast, where the seductions of Antioch, the conquered city of Sin, proved almost a greater peril than the armies of the enemy.

Some half-million of the soldiers of the Cross had perished before at last in 1099 the Holy City fell. Perhaps their sufferings may make some allowance for the terrible scenes that followed.

One of the first tasks of the victorious Crusaders was the rebuilding of the Holy Sepulchre. They found an open court, containing various shrines disconnected and rather poorly built, still following the original Byzantine plan. They conceived the idea of enclosing all the shrines under the roof of a single vast church. They wished it to be the most glorious example of all the churches of the new age. In their train were many master-masons and architects who were imbued with the spirit of the Gothic style that in their home lands was now replacing the heavier and more restricted Romanesque. The craftsmanship of Europe was drawn upon to make a building truly worthy of its unique and priceless associations and of all the toll of human lives that the redemption of the Sepulchre had caused. The Greek Emperor, now relieved of his unwelcome guests,

gave his assistance also, lending the most skilled of his mosaic workers.

So there grew up the great edifice, which in its outline is the same as is seen to-day. Descriptions by travellers of the period, Moslem as well as Christian, talk in marvelling terms of the gorgeous mosaics that covered the roofs and walls, of the expensive hangings and brocades and paintings. Between the entrance doors was a statue of the Risen Lord and over the lintels sculptured tympana of shining marble, depicting the raising of Lazarus and the Last Supper, and an allegory of the Tree of Life. The Golgotha Chapel in particular was covered with glowing mosaic, and was adorned with a marble pavement of elaborate design.

For four hundred years the great Church of the Crusaders, with all its chapels and commemorative shrines, stood as it was built. Like his great predecessor Omar, Saladin, when the Holy City fell into his power after the disaster of Hattin, displayed a spirit of mercy and tolerance to the Christians, and placed guards at the entrance to the Sepulchre to show to all that he regarded the sacred building as lying under his protection. And throughout the centuries of Moslem rule there was comparative peace in Jerusalem, though at times the conditions of the Christians grew worse and the tolls that were exacted from pilgrims became oppressive. The danger rather lay from the unending quarrels among the Christian sects themselves and from the intrigues of the Foreign Powers who used them, the French the Latins, the Russians the Orthodox, as pawns in their diplomatic struggles at the Porte. The predominance in the Holy Places between Western and Eastern Christianity was constantly changing—in the middle of the eighteenth century no less than six times in as many years—and on each occasion a rich profit must have flowed into the coffers of the Sultan.

It was in 1808 that the last tragedy occurred when, one hot summer's morning, through the carelessness of an Armenian monk, a devastating fire broke out, destroying the wooden Dome of the Rotunda and gutting the interior of the Choir and of the Golgotha chapels. Much of what was left of the Crusaders' handiwork, including the Gothic shrine over the Tomb itself, now perished. Worse was to come, for it was left to the hand of the restorer to complete the havoc of the fire. The Latin Powers were then in the throes of their struggle with Napoleon, so the Greek Orthodox saw their chance and elicited the Sultan's approval for the restoration to be carried out by them. They began by destroying the Tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin that lay just inside the entrance; they blocked the Gothic windows; they defaced the Calvary chapels with cheap plaster decorations and, as a crowning horror, erected the tasteless and unworthy structure that now covers the Tomb. Moreover, the work was throughout badly executed, with the result that the Church presents the aspect of general untidiness, of peeling plaster and dirty stucco, that it does to-day. This sad state of affairs was made much worse by the violent jealousies between the various communities who hold rights of office in the Church, on which account it became practically impossible for even the smallest work of renovation, or sometimes even cleaning, to be carried out. And provided that there was no serious breach of the peace, the Turk did not bother.

At last now it has been possible to put in hand the most essential repairs and to remove some of the worst blemishes: for, under the beneficent and impartial sway of Great Britain, even the most longstanding and the bitterest rivalries can eventually lose their force.

KINGS, QUEENS AND CORONATIONS.

BY E. THORNTON COOK.

FROM the day when William the Conqueror bestrode the grave of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, demanding the crown, to the accession of George VI, England has known forty ruling sovereigns. Of these, four have come to the throne as children and four between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. Nine had passed the twentieth milestone; thirteen were in the thirties, four in the forties and three over fifty. Edward VII celebrated his sixtieth birthday three months after his Coronation, and William IV, England's oldest monarch, came to the throne at sixty-five. Edward V and Edward VIII were England's only uncrowned kings. Not since the seventeenth century, and the coming of William of Orange, have we had so youthful a King as George VI—nor, from 1066 to the Coronation of James II, one so mature.

'A Coronation,' said Horace Walpole, stirred by the romance of newly wedded George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, is 'the liveliest sight in the world,' and he found the ceremony in the Abbey 'as awful a pageant as can be!'

Prices for Coronation seats have risen considerably. When Edward II was crowned a charge of a farthing was considered somewhat excessive, but those who wished to see Henry VIII ride down Cheapside with beautiful Katherine of Aragon in her litter drawn by white palfreys, had to pay eight times as much. At the Restoration householders along the route would let no seats under half a crown, and

when George I came from Hanover five shillings was the charge, despite the fact that the monarch had left his Queen behind. Forty-six years later a fortunate few paid ten good golden guineas to look down on the youthful King and Queen (who had stirred Walpole's enthusiasm) from the vantage-point of a seat aloft in the Abbey. Guineas, be they never so golden, fail in obtaining such privilege in an age which is often called materialistic !

The earliest known consecration of a King in England took place in the eighth century, and two hundred years later St. Dunstan administered a Coronation oath to Ethelred II that is strangely similar in essentials to that which will be taken by George VI when he goes 'to be hallowed king with mickle pomp' as have his predecessors.

'In the name of Christ, I promise three things to the Christian people my subjects,' so vowed Ethelred. 'First that the Church of God and all Christian peoples shall always preserve true peace under our auspices ; second that I will interdict rapacity . . . third that I will command equity and mercy in all judgments.' . . .

Later, the oath was cast in interrogatory form. That framed for 'Gulielmi et Maria Riegis et Regina Angliae' is the basis of the modern oath :

'Will you solemnly promise and swear to God to govern the people of the Kingdom of England and the Dominions thereunto belonging according to the Statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same ?'

Rex et Regina : 'I solemnly promise so to do.'

'Will you, to your power, cause law and justice and mercy to be executed in all your judgments ?'

Rex et Regina : 'I will.'

'Will you, to the utmost of your power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel and the

Protestant Reformed religions established by law, and will you preserve to the Bishops and Clergy of this Realm, and to the Church committed to their charge, all just rights and privileges, as by law do, or shall, appertaineth to them or any of them ?'

Rex et Regina : 'All this I promise to do.'

King and Queen had attended early service at Whitehall before coming to the Abbey, as it was considered only proper that the sovereigns should 'begin that glorious day with Him by Whom Kings reign.' It was an anxious hour. A letter from her exiled father had just been thrust into Mary's hand threatening her with his curse as the usurper of his throne—and as the Coronation procession started William received word of James's landing in Ireland.

Treasured in our archives lie the Coronation Rolls of our sovereigns complete since the coming of the Stuarts. Each measure eighteen yards or more, the vellum sheets (24" × 12") being tacked together. That of George IV is unique in that it lacks the King's signature to the oath, since, by some inexplicable oversight, the responsible cleric forgot to see this sheet laid ready on the altar. George alone was unperturbed and volunteered to subscribe, instead, the copy of the oath as printed in the service book used by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Coronations have increased in dignity through the ages. John, as a reward to the Cinque Ports for services rendered in connection with his various voyages to and from Normandy, appointed five representative barons to carry a canopy over his head when he went to the Abbey. By the time James II and beautiful Mary of Modena came to the throne the number had been increased considerably :

'And the Barons of the Cinque Ports, thirty-two in all, stood with the canopies at the upper end of the Great Hall,

and sixteen of them received the Queen at the foot of the great stone steps, three of the said barons supporting each of the corner staves and two each of the middle staves ; the other sixteen received the King in like manner.'

Terrible trouble developed over these gentry in later reigns. At the Coronation Banquet of George II their position was shifted from the first table on the King's right hand to the second—and never a baron would sit ! Alas, the protest availed nothing. At the next Coronation the indignant barons found no table prepared for them whatever.

At the Court of Claims which sat before the Coronation of Henry III the Lord Mayor and certain citizens succeeded in enforcing their claim to the office of ' Cellers,' and rode in the royal procession from the Tower to Westminster, each with a gold or silver cup in his hand as badge of office.

Edward III founded ' the loving Company of the Order of the Garter,' appointing St. George, the Victorious, knight and martyr, as its patron saint ; succeeding Kings permitted Knights of the ' Blew Garter ' to hold the canopy which screened royalty during the anointing.

On the eve of the Coronation of Henry IV the Order of the Bath was created and henceforward newly made knights were entitled to carry certain dishes to the King's table at the wondrous banquets held in Westminster Hall.

Henry VII, not feeling too sure of his position despite the defeat of Richard III at Bosworth, raised the Yeomen of the Guard, enrolling in the corps only those who were ' hardy, strong and of agility.' People shook their heads, ' not remembering any King of England before that time which used such a furniture of daily soldiers.' But Henry VIII thought little of the fifty archers who had attended his father, ' hardy, strong and of agility ' though they might be. To

them was now delegated such odd jobs as the putting up and taking down of the royal beds when the Court travelled, and the carrying of the King's baggage. The Gentlemen Pensioners—later named the Band of the Gentlemen at Arms—were called into being to serve as the sovereign's personal bodyguard.

Elizabeth took pity on the discarded Yeomen (there were handsome men among them, and she so hated those of ill-favour that an otherwise suitable attendant could find no place at court when he lacked a front tooth) and allowed them to carry in the royal dinner. The dress, scarlet with a golden rose on the wearer's back, was not expensive, the 'Goune' costing Xs with 'IIIs and VIII extra for the hosen and shoone.'

Crowds thronged the streets to watch 'the most dradde soveraigne Ladye Elizabeth pass to Westminster all richlie furnished and honourably accompanied, though Bishops might hesitate to anoint her. Those who could find seats paid sixpence for them right willingly.'

En route the new Queen was offered a Bible, a purse of gold and some cautionary pageantry in which 'the causes of a ruinous Commonwealthe' were illustrated.

Greatly stirred, Elizabeth vowed that she would be as good to her subjects 'as ever Quene was. . . . No will in me can lacke, neither, do I trust, shall lacke any power . . . And for the peace and quietness of you all I will not spare, if need bee, to spend by bloode.'

So might have spoken the first of the Tudors when claiming the crown 'by heredity and the judgment of God,' or that bold Lancastrian, Henry IV, who snatched the crown from a weak monarch.

'And as he went to Westminster on every side of him he had a sword borne, the one the Sword of the Church, the

other the Sword of Justice. . . . Thus they entered the Abbey Church of St. Peter at nine of the clocke, and in the midst of the Church was a high scaffold all covered in red, and in the midst thereof was a Chair Royal covered with cloth of gold. Then the King sat down in the Chair and so sat in Estate Royall saving he had not the crown . . . Then at the four corners of the scaffold the Archbishop of Canterbury showed unto the people how God had sent unto them a man to be their King.' . . .

One needs a lion heart to be a monarch and so Queen Elizabeth learnt in the forty-four years of her reign :

'To be a King and weare a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that beare it,' she told her last Parliament. 'For myself, I never was so much enticed with the glorious name of King . . . as delighted that God had made mee his instrument to maintain His truth and to . . . defend this kingdome from dishonour, damage, tyrannie and oppression.' . . .

The Coronation of George IV was one of the most splendid known. At it, for the last time, was served the gorgeous Coronation banquet in Westminster Hall, whereat those who had made good their petitions proving themselves tenants of the crown 'by grand serjeanty' performed personal service.

With the banquet passed the age-old challenge which used to be delivered by the sovereign's champion between courses.

For five hundred years a Dymoke had served the royal line in this capacity. One Dymoke had been Elizabeth's champion, his son had launched the same defiance on behalf of James I and Charles I; his grandson dashed down the gauntlet after the Restoration.

'Armed at all points in rich armour and riding a goodlie

white charger between the High Constable and the Erle Marshall also on horseback' the Champion entered the Hall and before him went 'two Trumpetters, two Sergeants at Arms with their Maces and two Esquires, one carrying the "targett" and the other a lance. . . . Before them went Yorke Herald :

'If any person of what degree soever, high or low, shall deny or gainsay Our Sovereigne Lord King Charles the Second, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, Sonne and next heire to our Sovereign Lord Charles the First, the last King deceased, to be right heire to the Imperiall Crowne of this Realme . . . here is his Champion who sayeth that he lyeth and is a false Traytor, being ready in person to combat with him.' . . .

Three times over did the bold words ring out and was the gauntlet thrown, after which the Champion made 'humble obeysance to the King and a guilt cup full of wine being brought . . . the King drank to the Champion.' Then the Knight quaffed the remainder of the wine, 'and making him humble reverence departed, taking the Cup for his fee.' . . .

Economically minded, William IV decided to forgo such pageantry for his country's good and, having been crowned, drove happily home immediately afterwards.

Young Queen Victoria contented herself with a state banquet at the Palace on usual lines, as did Edward VII and George V.

Reading the menus provided for the sumptuous feasts which were spread in Westminster Hall for a line of sovereigns whose reigns extended over seven hundred and fifty years, one marvels that never one of the newly crowned monarchs succumbed to the Ordeal by Food which they were required to undergo.

The Coronation banquet of Edward I cost eight counties

an average of 60 oxen, 100 pigs, 60 sheep and 3,000 fowls each. In all 23,500 animals were slaughtered to make this Plantagenet's holiday, while 1,000 pipes of wine were contributed by the King's continental dominions.

The banquet provided for eighteen-year-old Katherine of Valois, when Henry V won her at point of the sword, took place in Lent, so 'this feast was all of fish. Nothing of mete was there saving brawne served with mustarde.' But there were 'ded eels a-plentie,' to say nothing of 'pyke, trought, codlyng and fryed playes and crabs,' likewise 'freshe salmon, breame of the Sea, broyled smelt and lampreys frese baked.'

James II was more fortunate, he having selected St. George's Day for the Coronation. On this occasion twelve hundred and forty-five dishes were served to the diners in Westminster Hall, ninety-nine of them at the royal table. Among the viands were such delicacies as 'cocks-combes, cabbage pudding, stags tongues, Rabbett ragout, oysters and mushrooms well pickled, periwinkles, razor fish and carp, a Boares head enarmed in a Castell Royall, venyson, grouse, swanes, stewed heron, gilt pig, cranes, a pecok and some curlews,' together with a vast assortment of 'confections' and a lavish supply of creams. There is no information as to how many guests shared the ninety-nine works of art prepared by the King's Master Cook, 'all of which were well dressed and ordered all manner of ways,' but their Majesties 'withdrew from the banquet at seven of the clocke, extremely well satisfied.'

In dusty files among other records one may find 'the expenses and charges of such dinners' together with minute particulars as to the measurements and arrangement of the tables; that prepared for Charles II, 'at which only his Majesty and the Duke of York sat, being 18 ft. long and 4½ broad.' It was served with three courses of meat, thirty-two dishes

to a course; this in addition to 240 lb. of 'confections dry, choice confections liquid, and 4 basons of creams.'

Those of lesser rank were served at other tables, that for the Lords Spiritual being 30 feet long and 4 feet broad. These received '2 messes of the like fare to His Majesty's in three courses, seventy-two dishes of meat to a mess.'

The Lords Temporal were ranged along 88 feet of table and feasted on 320 separate dishes.

The Lord Mayor and his Aldermen, the Barons of the Cinque Ports, and the Heralds, had short lengths of board with upwards of 300 dishes of viands in addition to confectionery 'wet and dry,' fruits of the season and salads.

At the Coronation banquets those ladies who were merely permitted to look down upon the festival, lowered handkerchiefs and baskets and drew up such delicacies as could be spared by the surfeited diners down below.

Sometimes, temporary kitchens were erected in Palace Yard to facilitate the serving of these feasts, but in every case the ceremonial was such that one wonders to what degree of chill the 'hotte metes' had succumbed before they reached his wearied Majesty.

'Dinner being ready,' the newly crowned King would appear (preceded by a fanfare of trumpets) carrying the Orb and Sceptre in his hands. Escorted by the Lord Chamberlain and with the Swords carried naked before him his Majesty would seat himself in the Chair of State. Generally the Queen arrived in a separate procession preceded by the Vice-Chamberlain and followed by various ladies who were required to sit at her Majesty's feet throughout the meal.

All being in readiness, 'My lords the Sewers' took up position and the Sergeant of the Silvery Skullery called for a dish of meat, wiped the bottom of the dish, likewise the cover, and took assay of it.

The Chief Lord Sewer, in a surcote with a hood about his neck and his towel over all, led the serving procession towards the dais on which stood the royal table according to age-old precedent.

Two Clerk Comptrollers
(In velvet gowns trimmed with gold lace with black velvet caps in their hands.)

Two Clerks of the Green Cloth

The Master of the Household. The Cofferer.

Six Sergeants at Arms with their Maces
(two abreast)

The Earl Marshal on a The High Steward on a
charger (with staff of gold in (with white wand) Charger.
his hand).

Six Sergeants at Arms with their Maces
(two abreast)

The Comptrollers of their Majesties' Households with various assistants brought up the rear.

When Knights of the Bath had been newly created these performed serving service ; failing these, the Gentlemen Pensioners marched up two by two, followed by as many 'private gentlemen' as the number of the dishes made necessary ; but first came the Lord of the Manor of Addington carrying 'a mess of potage or gruel called Dilligrout' which had been served at Coronation banquets from time immemorial, he being attended by 'two Clerks of the Kitchen in black satin gowns.'

So the first course reached the table, but even yet their majesties might not eat. With solemn state the Regalia had to be delivered to the lords appointed for the honour of holding it. Then the Lord Great Chamberlain and his Majesty's Cupbearer must go to the King's cupboard, and

having washed, the Lord Great Chamberlain, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, attended by the Cupbearer and followed by the Sewers, must bring up à 'bason' for his Majesty's ablutions. Water was poured over the royal hands and the Lord of the Manor of Heydon held out the towel. . . .

The Queen's hands were cleansed with similar ceremony and matters advanced a step further.

Grace was said and at length their majesties sat down to dine, as did the peers and peeresses, these being attended on generally 'by persons who waited at the various cupboards,' and specifically by their personal menials, 'each member of the nobility being allowed one servant.'

The Chief Cupbearer (accompanied by assistants) now offered liquid refreshment in a gilt bowl that had to be returned to him as his fee ; their majesties began to eat and the minor procession in which the Champion was the chief figure rode in.

The gorgeous meal continued with interminable ceremony. Now one presented three maple cups, the origin of which offering is lost in antiquity, now another brought 'a charger of wafers.'

The Lord Mayor of London, accompanied by the King's Cupbearer, came from the cupboard where he had attended to assist the Chief Butler, and with him walked twelve aldermen representative of the city corporations, draper, mercer, grocer, fishmonger, goldsmith, skinner, merchant-tailor, haberdasher, salter, ironmonger, vintner and cloth worker. Solemnly offering a bowl of wine they watched his Majesty drink, whereupon the Mayor claimed the golden bowl as perquisite and led his followers to find a place at table.

Darkness fell, the King's largess was scattered among the

people, healths were drunk with loyalty and affection, and the great ceremony drew to its conclusion. Water was brought once more ; once again their majesties washed. The attendant lords handed back the royal ornaments, the processions re-formed, the Regalia was delivered to the ecclesiastics for temporary safe-keeping until the treasures could be returned to the Tower, and for royalty, the main happenings of the Coronation were over.

But the Lords Commissioners of the Court of Claims, who had previously delivered judgment as to which of the many claimants were entitled to do service now sat once more ' to take account how the various officers had performed their tasks ' and see that all had their fees. The Archbishop of Canterbury required the purple velvet chair wherein he had sat and the stool on which he had knelt ; the Earl Marshal claimed the King's palfrey and the chimes of all the swans and cranes that had been served during the banquet. To the Chief Butler fell ' the best cold cup and cover with all the vessels of wine remaining under the bar.' The Grand Panneter, whose task it had been ' to beare the salte and the serving knives from the Pantry to the Kynges dyning table,' demanded all the salt cellars and spoons that had been used, while the Chief Lardiner asked for the remains of the venison, the kids, lard, fish and salt as his just dues. A Norfolk man claimed all the napery. The Almoner's demands included the silver dish in which the alms had been collected, a length of carpet over which the King had walked and ' a tun of good wine ' (it is not surprising that, at one coronation, there had been six claimants for this lucrative post). Meanwhile, the King's Champion waited to know his Majesty's decision as to whether he might retain the charger upon which he had ridden and the royal armour in which his person had been encased.

When all were satisfied the weary commissioners had to see to it that the Coronation Roll was given into safe custody, "for the benefit of posteritie."

In the Coronation Proclamation of George VI a clause safeguards the rights of those of his Majesty's 'loving subjects' who, through hereditary, claim right of performance 'of any such several Services, or any of them, at any future Coronation'; and it may be that in the misty future there will arise some monarch of strong stomach and much endurance who will revive the ancient glory of the gargantuan culinary festival which was celebrated over a period of seven and a half centuries in Westminster Hall.

God Save the King !

LONELINESS.

*That He alone might lead me by the hand,
God gave me Thoughts that none can understand.*

*That I might cast on Him my every care,
God gave me Dreams that no one else can share.*

*That I might never learn to love Him less,
God, in His wisdom, gave me loneliness.*

CORYN HART.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

BY ALAN JENKINS.

WHEN I came home the pale sky had been washed clean of clouds except for a few long grey-mauve shoals that hung about the west like ships awaiting the turn of the tide. I marched with a swing, for my ears were ringing yet with a wild fierce song that I had heard in a tiny hideous village-hall, *Cymru'n Un*, which is like a savage, fanatical battle-cry, the cry of the Wales of long ago when she challenged all who approached her marches, Saxon and Norman and English.

As I entered the dim kitchen, its blue slate floor afflicker with firelight, Mrs. Rhys was reaching down a ham from a smoke-stained beam, and I noticed that the three cats, Persians who would leap at your eyes if you were not watchful, were not paying court to her as they did usually as supper-time approached. Then I saw them in the corner, intently inspecting the butt of Mr. Rhys's crook. Inquisitive, I lifted it up. There were smears of yolk and a chip or two of eggshell. At first I thought nothing of it; but my imagination runs on quick wheels and I suddenly wondered, for I had watched the birds on many days.

I was angry, and the old shepherd was angry, too, or sulky, rather, and because of that I saw that my guess had not been wild. He glanced sourly at me, he knew he had been wrong. I liked him when he was warm and gentle, when he was telling his grandson tales of the dog of darkness, or the *gwŷll* that rides over the moors and the black mountains on wind-tormented nights; but now he was sulky

and hostile and it was no use arguing with him. He knew the moor as another man knows his courtyard. He knew every gully and dingle and stone wall and brawling stream and sheep-track for miles round. He could watch the stars and the sky or smell the wind and say what weather would come. He was a healer, too. Yet so many years of wind and sun and rain and mist had not made his mind any more flexible. He was as stubborn as gorse root, and an idea once inside his small, alert, grizzled head and it stayed there however much in his innermost heart he knew he was wrong.

The passing of the storm had ript and rent the grey louring sky, and now rain-washed blue showed beneath the ragged hems of clouds rolling ponderously along the horizon, north and south. Westward, many long miles westward, lying like a drop of liquid in a spoon, which was a hollow of the mountains—blue and rain-sharpened—something glinted under a fugitive sunbeam, something grey and faint-seen : the distant sea across whose tormented waves the storm had trumpeted, lashing gull and cliff and boat with a demoniac fury.

A steady, warm wind, like a woman's even voice after the raging of a man, bluffed down from the mountains, furrowing the dark sombre heather and stippling with crescent ripples the calmer stretches of the clamorous streams along whose banks so many dippers already had their young.

On, on until they were halted like an invading army by the steadfast mountain-walls, the undulations of the moor rolled out, broken here and there by little hillocks and outcrops of shale, round whose time-leafed sides the heather lapped.

The voices of the moorland ran with the wind : the

vehement sibilant chorus of larks ascending on shivering wings, their small throats pulsating, their blood coursing hotly through their veins as they sang of their love ; the long liquid bubble-cry of mated curlews who had come up from the winter estuaries ; the more frequent wail of plovers, whose round green wings, glossed with bronze and purple, bobbed and flickered as the birds dashed and hurtled madly in the ecstasy of their nuptials, mastering gravity and wind, yet knowing not how they did so.

Out of the wind dropt another cry, faint and mewling and sorrowful, true voice of the moorland. Five hundred feet above the ivy-bearded lip of a ravine, fashioned and wrought by time and weather long before men drove sheep to the moorland, a bird wheeled, circling easily and gracefully. Black and small, a dark eyelash against the sky, the buzzard sailed in leisured flight. Sometimes, with wings motionless and square tail spread, he tilted in the wind, and imperceptibly, like the gentle fluting of water as a swallow dips to drink, a ripple passed through his quivering pinions.

Then suddenly, with wings half-closed as if he had lost the power of flight, in one abrupt sliding drop he fell a hundred feet, checked himself and wheeled again.

His mewling cries dropt thin and frail out of the clear air. The broad brown wings, paler and fringed with black to the eyes of his watching mate, flapped four times and once more he slid and checked, this time when he was the height of a fir-tree above the steep-sided little ravine, along whose rock-strewn bed a stream babbled excitedly on its journey to the sea.

Towards one of the uneven ledges that scarred the face of the cliff he gazed down with mild dark eyes. His brooding mate answered him cry for cry. She gazed intently up as he tacked and wheeled above her. She longed to rise

from the nest of heather bents and fibrous gorse branches, writhing sinuously about the rabbit bones and cast pellets which littered the ledge ; but she must stay, for between the sparse nest-lining of grass and dirty wool and her warm body lay three eggs, large and dull white and marked with red and violet. Before two sunsets had made the mountains glow, the first grotesque nestling would be struggling from his clinging shell.

She longed to rise and join her mate, so that together they might soar high into the spring sky, up, up, higher, still higher they would soar as they had done so many times, circling, crossing each other's paths and sometimes curving so close that their splayed pinion-tips seemed to touch, gently as a moth's wings touch a flower ; and then dividing they would glide half a mile across the valleys, and still mewling, sweep back and soar again, their flight their song——

But now she must stay and give warmth, and therefore life, to the blue, curled embryos which would one day master the air and the running wind—friend and enemy by turn—with all the grace of their parents. So the buzzards answered cry for cry, happy in each other.

To live he must kill : in a while the buzzard grew silent and drifted away. His brown eyes looked not for his mate but for prey moving on the face of the drear heather. He circled half a mile, soaring, soaring, wheeling, slowly, leisurely, head to wind, bony brows bent earthwards, wings bent slightly back like the keel of an anchor. Every trick and lift of the wind was met with a movement of wings and barred tail, a ripple of pinions, and the masterful poise was scarcely disturbed. Wind and wing strove together, yet in their striving were united, a foil to each other.

Far below the watching bird the lapwings flickered ceaselessly, mad in love. Once seven golden plovers passed across the moor in steady flight. Their lovely wings splintered the sunbeams into stabbing, darting needle-fragments. One of their own kindred ran forward in the heather as he saw them. He called *tooli tooli* in welcome, but the little flock of late-comers flew dumbly on and he relapsed into forlorn silence and stood on one leg, gazing after them.

The buzzard slid lower and watched for a beetle to scuttle across a bald patch of earth under the shadow of a grey boulder that was streaked white with his own droppings ; for here he perched often, head hunched into shoulders, while the moorland wind searched through the feathers of his breast. No sign of life revealed itself and presently the buzzard descended towards this boulder to wait for a rabbit on the gentle slope which ran away from the heather-washed outcrop.

A rabbit was already out. An old buck lay in the spring-brilliant grass that struggled against the heather. When he saw the buzzard descend he crouched closely, not daring to move.

But grouse had been fighting near by, raising their blood-red wattles and challenging every cock of the moorland. They fought even though they had mated long since. They had been too preoccupied to notice the buzzard before, and now they rose with a startling *huverra* of wings and scattering, for they no longer went in packs, fled, calling *kok kok kok*, warning all who were there to listen. The sudden whirr of bowed wings made the rabbit leap up in fright. The buzzard launched out clumsily from the white-stained boulder and swept low over the slope. The terror-stricken animal twisted and doubled as the great shadow drew closer.

With a dozen powerful sweeps of his vans the buzzard drove himself above his quarry. Yellow claws dangled ready for the kill. Wings thrashing above his back, he struck. Wings thwapt the heather as bird and animal struggled. The rabbit squealed as black curved talons tore flesh and fur of his haunches. His speed carried him on and the grip ended there. Bleeding and wild with pain and fear, the old buck scrambled down a bolt-hole. Others of his kith awoke at his coming and grew aware of his terror. They shifted uneasily away. Panting and grunting, the buck crouched by himself in the soothing darkness of the bury. He died slowly, days later, for the black talons had laid open his flesh even to the spine.

Wide wings turned away. The buzzard mounted. As he went his claws clutched and opened nervously with excitement of the chase. He had failed. He must kill elsewhere.

He soared two hundred feet and wheeled in a wide, effortless circle. He had seen something that drew him down. Under another outcrop lay a dingy grey-white form, inert and bedraggled. About it two small shapes moved, black and intent. The buzzard planed above them, his mild eyes watching anxiously. So graceful and powerful in flight, he feared the carrion crows. He feared everything ; even the petulant-voiced plovers would mob him if he went near their nesting-ground, but most of all he feared the crows.

But here was meat. He slid down. The crows ceased their feasting when they heard the wind of his approach and gazed up angrily, their thick black beaks raised in readiness. When he settled on the grey shale with a flapping of wings that fanned the feathers of their backs, they resumed their meal, *paarking* abuse at him. They knew him well for a coward.

The buzzard did not attempt to join them. He must wait until they had had their fill. He watched them with mild melancholy yellow-rimmed eyes. His sickle talons could have struck off the head of each crow in flight. Yet was he afraid.

When, despite all his vicious buntings, his dam's meagre udders would yield no more milk for the time being, and his totter-legged companions had wearied of play, the lamb wandered inquisitively from the flock. The storm came and the sheep had moved like a grey wave down the slopes, while the lamb blundered farther away, his voice lost in the wind-howl. Sometimes he ran a little way and then halted, bleating urgently, then on again, anywhere but in the right direction, lashed by wind and rain. Weak and terrified he had tottered into the shelter of the outcrop while rain hissed through the heather and hail spattered and bounced in glee. In the west steam-white clouds trailed across the hidden mountains.

When the storm passed and the seeping rivulets ran away down the peaty soil, the crows came out, glad of the warmth on their bedraggled feathers. They found the dying lamb and contemplated him from the glistening boulder. *Aark aaruke*, they consulted together, as timid sunlight shot their plumage green and blue-black. Then they leapt down and cursed angrily at each other as to which should peck out the frightened eyes. That done, their stout black beaks quickly hammered the spark of life out of the small exhausted body.

Somewhere a black-faced ewe raised her frenzied voice long and frequently as she stumbled about sniffing each lamb of the flock in turn.

The buzzard waited.

Even the crows were satisfied at last. First one, then the

other hopped heavily away, belching his pleasure. They wiped their beaks on the grass, leaning their heads and snapping them from side to side. .

Then one rose and harried the buzzard, and the other, who had waddled back and stood contemplating the carcass, reluctant to leave it, followed her example. Together they dived and swooped about the buzzard, jeering as they passed. Humbly he endured their insults for a while, until one of them stooped suddenly with black claws outspanned and buffeted him off his perch. A little cloud of brown neck feathers floated down and lay on the bloody sides of the lamb.

The buzzard mewed plaintively and flapped back to the boulder, but the crows kept up the game. They were enjoying this, they *paarked* to each other. At last the buzzard spread his wings and soared above them, whereupon the black marauders sheered off eastward, croaking derision and contentment.

The buzzard fell and glided to the boulder, paused a moment, and then, flapping down, began to feed on the slinkmeat.

He gorged himself on the still-warm flesh, until his hooked beak and yellow cere were stained with blood. Then, having reascended to his perch and preened his soft brown plumage, he launched heavily out and set off for the distant ledge to relieve his mate.

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When the slip of the new moon was growing visible in the south-east, frail and fresh and clean in the rain-washed sky, a plummy-tailed black-and-white sheepdog came questing over the slopes of the moor. Behind him, four hundred yards away, a man followed, moving resolutely with the steady plod of the moorlander.

Sometimes the wiry, high-trotting dog would halt and, with one forepaw raised, look back uncertainly at his master, as if seeking advice. Then he would run on again, sharp muzzle to ground for a moment, then lifting his head, gaze with deep-brown, intelligent eyes across the moor.

When the man reached the brow of the slope he, too, halted and, with a ragged-sided telescope at his eye, stood scanning the dark, rain-beaded heather that rolled out steadfast as the distant mountains, where dwelt finality and absoluteness.

Long did they cast about the breadth of the moor, while both man and dog listened for a summoning bleat above the murmur of the wind and the wail of plovers who still flung and tumbled in aerial display. But no bleat came, and when at last the shepherd heard one short urgent bark from the sheepdog, he knew how his search had ended.

He made his way slowly towards the boulders where the dog stood on guard, tongue aloll and brown eyes turned in understanding towards him.

‘I could well have told, indeed,’ the old man muttered, nodding his head and stirring the carcase with his foot. His weather-flayed cheeks flushed dull ember red as he leant on his crook and regarded the lamb. The dog flagged an apologetic tail.

The shepherd stooped suddenly and picked up three or four brown feathers that nestled in the grass. He held them in his palm and gazed on them a moment. Then he tilted his hand and let them float gently away one by one. He raised his eyes skyward. What he sought was not there.

‘I do know where though, yes,’ he answered his unuttered thoughts as he nodded to the dog. With a last glance at the lamb he turned and traipsed away across the moor. As though he were treading a well-marked track he set out

purposefully north-west. The wiry sheepdog trotted by his side.

A mile distant the little ravine opened treacherously and abruptly in the heather. The shepherd made his way round the shoulder of it and plodded along the precipitous edge.

As he trod through the wind-murmurous heather, wings whipt twenty yards away. First one, and presently the other buzzard lumbered out, silhouetted like blown burnt paper against the twilight sky. Soaring and mewing they beat up and away, and then afraid, wheeled above man and dog. They sailed about uneasily, their hearts full of fear. The timid male wheeled higher, mewing anxiously. His mate, bolder in her mother-instinct, circled lower round the man, but she too was afraid to come within striking distance. They did not curse, they mewed for pity.

Carefully the shepherd shuffled to the brink. He did not like the ravine. When he was a boy he had seen his father fall over its treacherous lip, and for long nights after he had dreamt of the grotesque broken body lying down there amongst the gorse and the scattered shale.

One hand clutching the heather, he dropt down full length and peered over. In a while his old eyes picked out what they sought. He shifted until he was directly above the ivy-hung ledge. He cast about for a stone. Then he realised he could reach the nest with his crook. He lowered it over, butt-end first, and with a quick stab broke one, then another, and finally the third of the precious shells.

Grunting with exertion, he drew back from the cliff and levered himself to his feet; then, shaking a gnarled knot-veined fist at the wheeling, mewing birds, he turned, and accompanied by the sedately trotting dog, trudged away home into the coming starlight.

CINDERELLAS OF THE BOOK-SHELF.

II.—SORCERY IN WORDS.

BY W. J. BLYTON.

IN a previous saunter through guide-books and maps, of all manner of countrysides and shires, we travelled in imagination on foot or at most jogged in coaches or were given a 'lift.' But in these next journeys it must be something swifter and dizzier than an aeroplane; say, the seven-league boots of swiftness. The transitions and flights offered to the fancy by any dictionary (of dates, words or proper names) are incredibly swift—and refreshing. Only, the proper way to get at the *attar* of this book is to tack and veer idly up and down it; curiosity at the prow, and impulse at the helm. He who reads for fun will end by being more learned than he who reads for utilitarian reasons.

None of us will be indifferent to the centenary this year of the birth of the very human, erudite editor of the astonishing *New English Dictionary*, Sir James Augustus Henry Murray, who began this task for the Philological Society in 1879, continuing it—fascinated himself, and fascinating others—for thirty-six years till he 'died learning.' He was kept busier than any goalkeeper stopping evil shots from language gate-crashers; and at the same time busier than any big *hôtelier* admitting interesting and lawful new guests, and making them comfortable, and introducing them to the 'permanents.' The result is a book which, frankly, is a trophy of civilisation—a log of the amazing human adventure.

It is still being added to ; a lighthouse in the restless ocean of language.

‘ The first work of the kind in which a man may learn to think,’ according to Voltaire, was Bayle’s dictionary in 1696. But that was tendentious, in the sceptical interest ; as Dr. Johnson’s was wilful and individual. To write Sir James Murray’s name is to be reminded of the vast advance—humanist and scientific—since then ; also that the name has figured before in philology. Consider the prestige of Lindley Murray, Gilbert Murray’s mastery of Greek and English, the gifts to literature from the house of Murray.

To take up a dictionary for ten minutes is, with most people who are not driven for time, to stretch the ten to fifty. For most of us are just walking curiosities, animated interrogation marks. We distrust specialism, but like tramp-steamers will take on any queer or out-of-the-way cargo. Surely it was in this connection that the sensible jingle was composed—

*‘ The world is so full of a number of things,
I’m sure we should all be happy as kings.’*

A million words is nothing nowadays for a dictionary. Shakespeare contrived to work his miracles with, I believe, sixty thousand. Alas, many of us fob ourselves off with about five thousand only. We live in a well-found palace, but exist like disinherited sons. In 1100 B.C. one of the most popular entertainment books in China was the guide to Chinese perfected by Pa-out-she, with forty thousand characters, most of them hieroglyphic or rude representations rather like our signs of the zodiac. But then the Chinese always *were* so inventive and advanced ! Anyway, it is clear that they had invented a first-rate parlour game. For a dictionary is fun and recreation as well as preserved history,

precipitated philosophy (language is a great metaphysician), dialect in amber, poetry in solution. Here is something made by Man which dwarfs and humbles the individual man.

Can there be (you wonder) so many things, so many varieties of the same thing, so many shades of meaning, so many arts, sciences, callings, and affairs as may be seen on a dozen pages? O brave new worlds! The mind feels like a country maid suddenly introduced into a sounding metropolis. Indeed, Man must have lived to some purpose if he has built this enormous pagoda or cathedral of knowledge in his sojourn thus far! No one of us can hope to master more than a fraction and an angle of it all. 'What a piece of work is Man! In apprehension, how like a god,' etc. And this vast coral reef of information is growing, growing, before our eyes; words, ideas, inventions, and slang pouring in. The War alone gave us a thousand or more for the successors of Sir James Murray to cope with in his centenary year. Sir Edward Cook amusingly confessed to trying to 'plant' new words on the dictionary-makers: he and his colleagues

'knew that Sir James Murray was a careful reader of the papers with which we were connected, and we used sometimes to coin new words for the fun of seeing whether they would be included in the *New English Dictionary*. But this is only a pale counterpart of the fun which must be derivable from the coinage of new words which are required by new feats of daring and invention, and which can perforce be added to the language.'

He instances *ceiling* as a verb used officially by Trenchard of the R.A.F. to mean ascending to great heights. The expressive word *blimp* was coined first to describe a type of aircraft; in the last year or so it has been turned into a verb also, to mean having a seaside holiday flight. As 'chippy' was once the ship's carpenter, so 'sparks' is the wireless

operator. *Ballyhoo* comes from America, and admirably describes noisy publicity. *Scrounge* and *buckshee* (the latter from the Eastern *baksheesh*) are, as slang, efficient; 'blan-kety' is a polite escape from any profane word; 'bug-house' is American for a neglected or unstrung brain; to 'click' is to get just what one wants; 'cold feet' as a synonym for fear was a luckier stroke of genius than 'wind up'; *dud* and *not so dusty* have come to stay—in familiar talk at least, with *fed up*, and *cut no ice*, and *hot stuff*, and *posh*, and *napoo*. Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear would have enjoyed, and added to, these interlopers.

The business man, or the young typist, in the corner of the train compartment, counting square spaces with a pencil, are new modern devotees of the Dictionary: the vogue of the cross-word puzzle has had a very stimulating effect upon the disposal of the larger kinds of standard dictionary. It is perhaps safe to suppose that some competitors have lost their chance of prize-money by becoming absorbed in the book's items for their own interest's sake, and have forgotten all about a word of three letters meaning a domestic pet. The perpetual brisk collision of the mind there with novel words and locutions can while away an hour or two happily, not the less because probably thirty per cent. of the words are not for common use, under pain of not being understood even by the educated, or of the imputation of pedantry. I have seen a Scot glow, after years of absence from his glen, at the word 'forjeskit . . . (dis) jasked. Worn out by toil, jaded,' and at 'glar, or glaur . . . slime or mud, to make muddy,' and at 'glaik, prob. connected with gleek . . . a trick, a hoax, a childish toy; a flash, a glance of the eye'; and thereupon he roved after hundreds of Scottish and north English old dialect words, with Scandinavian and Icelandic or Celtic origins—thus forgoing a winner's cheque but

winning pleasure of another sort. It is a good game, as full of mysterious vistas and beckoning clues as hide-and-seek in a forest. How fascinating this word-hunting can be, Trench showed in his companionable *Study of Words* in 1851, a book which you might fairly call a chatty, discursive dictionary; its vogue may be guessed by the fact that it went through twenty-one editions in the thirty years following publication, and it has been reissued often since with amplifications.

Let nobody waive this fireside game of word-hunting aside as a pursuit of shadows. Words are things. They create situations, good and evil. The Greek language had but one term for 'reason' and 'word'; for what is man's word but his reason coming forth that it may behold itself? The mere knowledge of the world which a loitering through an ordinary dictionary will give is unbelievable. At intervals of two minutes on the average, I have found an entry which is mighty pertinent to some business, or private, problem, and saves me a costly blunder; puts me right upon some embarrassing mispronunciation; brings up to date some legal term (altered by legislation I had forgotten); mentions some new diagnosis of an ailment, and the favoured regimen; presents suddenly—and this is a joy—a word I felt must exist, but which has teased me by its hiding for the last five years; and, in general, keeps one muttering, 'Really!' 'Fancy that,' and 'Well, how odd.' This would please the dictionary-makers, for they are human themselves: how human, is shown in the preface to one post-War specimen: 'The four years' orgy of crime, barbarity and violence was of itself enough to add to our vocabulary many words and expressions that will long be kept alive in memoirs and histories of this time.' It adds, that the words and phrases thus created were far too many to be

brought into the body of the work and had to go to make a supplement, virtually another dictionary ! The invasions were from America and the Dominions—and India—from wireless, films, aviation, engineering, and a score of other sources. It is of no use to complain : the tree will insist on growing. Only exact words *can* perpetuate discoveries. They are as necessary as peel to an orange, or a vessel to contain wine. All is lost without the word.

Should you ever feel intimidated by a learned man, safely you may correct this feeling by remembering your dictionary at home, and murmuring : ‘ Dear me, he’s a child in half those matters.’ And if the same book impeaches *you* of ignorance, at least it does so silently, proposes a gradual cure, and tactfully agrees to being consulted secretly, thus saving you many a humiliating verbal application to somebody who raises his eyebrows at your neglected education in some detail. And—shall we all agree to be frank with each other, and confess it ?—we all must have some culpable blind spots, little Saharas of no-information, and a few Dolomites of delusion. —Really, short of publishing our shame in company, or paying for a correspondence course, what is there to be done about it but to interview the kindest, briefest and most universal book within hand-reach : The good dictionary magicians are keen never to bore you ; they whet the appetite by brevity ; some beat the fairy-tale or the illustrated paper with little woodcuts or photogravures —of Kaffir kraals, volcanoes, animals, native costumes, flowers, ships, weapons, portraits, views, scientific implements, engineering feats, maps, famous paintings, musical instruments, charts of population, produce and wealth, first-aid treatment, crowns and coronets, medals, coins, trees, trophies and typography. Do we ever quite get past the picture-story stage, in certain moods ?

Let us merely imagine what the thirsty, wide-awake minds of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Newton—or even Pepys—would make of such a companion if they had had such things. The new ideas, the fresh imagery, the variety of creation, it would have suggested ! Johnson hoped that his seven years of drudgery would prelude another burst of literary greatness ; and sure enough, with his help—and that of the French Revolution and so on—a Romantic Movement did follow. Listen to him :

‘ We may no longer yield the palm of philology, without a contest, to the nations of the continent. The chief glory of every people arises from its authors. . . . I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if, by my assistance, foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth ; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle.

‘ No dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect, since, while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding and some falling away. He whose design includes whatever language can express, must often speak of what he does not understand, and will often faint with weariness under a task which Scaliger compares to the labour of the anvil and the mine. . . . If it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed ; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform the world that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance from the learned, and without any patronage of the great ; not in the soft obscurities of retirement or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amid inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. . . . I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise.’

There is the human note which we moderns say we like. Johnson, the maker of our first good dictionary, had a soul ; he knew that, by the iron that had entered into it ! Hence his definition of Pension (long before he was offered one) :

‘ An allowance made to anyone without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state-hireling for treason to his country.’

And of oats :

‘ A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.’

Whatever was said previously of the liberating effect of guide-books is true, with a slight difference, of these dictionaries and encyclopædias. The remedy for too much ego in our cosmos is—more cosmos in our ego. ‘ The universal is the true antiseptic,’ and there are few troubles which pester us and stagnate in our minds which cannot be blown away by opening the windows of a good dictionary. Morbidity cannot stand up to the wind caused by the infinity of things. But all this, only if it is read not as a book of reference but as the Diary of Mankind, the log of his voyage, his trek through the immensities of experience.

Marooned in a desert, or secluded as a political prisoner, a man might make shift to live a decent mental life with the unusual literary fare I have named. A friend who for years lived leagues away from others contrived to exist intelligently on a weather-expurgated Bible, three ancient New York magazines and papers, and a little pocket calendar with quotations. At an inn on a wet day one may find it possible to read through the local paper—meetings of cricket clubs one will never see, a presentation to the retiring surveyor, and letters to the editor on the proposals for a new recreation ground. It is said that Tennyson was once caught under

such conditions, so engrossed that he regretted not having the next copy of the paper to learn whether one of the girls in the story was confirmed. Lubbock was once bluntly asked: 'Have *you* read your "hundred best books"?' He vowed that he had—adding, 'Mostly while I have waited for trains at my village station.' A former acquaintance of mine, now dead, when sentenced to death (for a political cause) in a distant country, spent what he believed to be his last fortnight in—mathematics: 'I was never calmer or more self-forgetting,' he said; 'I even put on a little weight.' Mr. John Burns told me once that his interest in economics was first roused on the banks of the Niger, whither he went as foreman engineer, by a *Wealth of Nations* which an African missionary had left on the ground. It is remarkable what delight can be got from 'books that are no books,' to use the phrase of Charles Lamb, an epicure in these matters; who, however, would have relaxed his own rule if his age had possessed the guide-books, the souvenirs, and the good topography of to-day. Some hardy souls can face up to a Bradshaw, not for actual travel only, but as matter for retrospect. But I cannot say of this, as I can of the other out-of-the-way reading referred to, How often

*'in lonely rooms, and mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart.'*

Of a good gazetteer, on the other hand, this *can* be said, especially if it have illustrations, however small, for these are exciting little port-holes looking out on the world; ventilators of the imagination. It may seem, to an onlooker, like waste time, but information got idly and disinterestedly stays with us when facts crammed for an examination

notoriously do not. Boswell once caught Johnson—not composing the dictionary, but whiling away time by eating roasted apples and perusing a History of Birmingham. ‘But, sir,’ protested Boswell, ‘do you not find it dull?’ ‘Why, yes, sir, it *is* dull,’ said the leviathan of lexicologists; ‘and yet there are notable things in it.’ Nobody can fairly damn with such half-praise the dictionaries, Johnson’s or anyone else’s. Detective stories pall at length; history at times becomes too controversial and troublous; books on medicine or health infect some of us with half the ailments named; on fiction one cannot live—though some ladies appear to do so, perhaps as a course of mental slimming; the daily paper occupies its half-hour well enough; and so, as light relief from the classics and the ‘large still books,’ what better than gazetteer or dictionary or encyclopædia of dates, events, terms and places?

A friend of mine who was often Kipling’s host used to tell me how Kipling loved nothing better than to lie face downward on the hearth with some dictionary (preferably technical—military, naval, engineering), or a treatise of native words and races, or a gazetteer of towns and places; and there by the hour he would absorb the alien *patois* and slang and specialisms. No wonder his books are so ‘knowing,’ and that experts over a range of subjects cannot catch him napping. When asked by his host whether he hunted words on any plan, he replied: ‘No. You’ve to treat your mind as a sportsman does his setter and let it run—if he is to bring home any game.’ That is the secret. To fetch wide circles is to get home best, just as in the kindred type of book in looking up Great Britain you are decoyed by Great Wall of China, Great Salt Lake, Great Smoky Mountains, Great Western Railway, Greece, Greenland—and so back home via Greenwich. Unless, of course, you scamper off again

via Gretna Green and Grime's dyke to the Grindelwald, the Grison, Guadeloupe and Guatemala ; and return, feeling mentally breathed and tanned. Good sport, taken leisurely.

Dryden, of whom Dr. Johnson hastily said that he found our language brick and left it marble, found the study of words a liberal education and amusement.

'It is said that I Latinise too much. When I find an English word significant and sounding, I neither borrow from the Latin or any other language ; but when I want at home, I seek abroad. I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return, but what I bring from Italy I spend in England. Here it remains and here it circulates. I trade both with the living and the dead for the enrichment of our native language. If I find a great word in a classic, I propose it to be naturalised. Yet if too many are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.'

This is why English is the most adequate living language—Saxon-Celtic-Greek-Latin-Norman : just as we who use it are Picts, Gaels, Cymric, Saxon, Dane, Norman, Fleming, and Huguenot inextricably.

The world is best taken not as an arena for competition, but as a pageantry of ideas, people, places and experiences. It belongs to those who *see* and enjoy it, not to those who have to drudge, conquer or push goods in it. Over the books I have named, a man can cheerfully say—

*'For me your tributary stores combine,
Creation's heir. The world, the world is mine.'*

AN UNSENTIMENTAL JOURNEY.

BY AIMÉE CADELL.

WE started on the first of April, a day which gave the foolhardy and slightly reckless touch to our adventure that we felt it required. Our objective was the Austrian Tyrol. Nothing more definite and nothing more exciting.

‘But where does the adventure come in?’ said my niece Joan, who had flown there several times. Judged by her standards, of course, it didn’t come in at all. If adventure necessitates a hazardous and difficult journey, then ours certainly was none. If, on the other hand, it means the lure of the unexpected, chance meetings, and amusing happenings, then for us every moment of our three weeks proved to be an adventure.

‘After all, Joan,’ I replied, ‘you must remember we were two middle-aged women, neither of whom had ever motored on the Continent before, and only one of whom had even a smattering of German. We did not want thrills and hair-breadth escapes. We had enough of them in the War. Besides, adventure is not so much enduring the unpleasant, however unexpected it may be, as surprise and joy at some new thing.’

‘For me,’ answered Joan, ‘adventure will always mean lions in the path.’

We left it at that.

The rain was pitiless when we set off, and a hundred and thirty-five miles to Dover was a long way to go. ‘It can’t possibly last like this,’ said Lauretta. I agreed. We little knew! On our return three weeks later we arrived in

just such a downpour, with this difference : that before we had gone more than a few miles it had turned to snow. Such is our English climate.

At Dover we found we had an hour to wait. Lauretta went off in search of postcards and stamps, while I stayed with the car. Ever since I can remember, my possessions have had an inconvenient and agitating way of acquiring personalities of their own. The car, I felt sure, must be anxious as to how and when she was going to be slung through the air and put on board the steamer, and it was up to me to see her through the ordeal. This peculiarity of mine makes the loss of any belongings doubly distressing. My spectacles, left at Hurlingham last week, are still calling for help, and I can never forget the drowning cries of a beloved felt hat that blew off in mid-Atlantic. Only when the car was safely on board, therefore, could I concentrate on the Belgian cat in which the embarkation officer had been trying for some time to make me take an interest.

'E's so savage no one can't go near 'im,' he said, pointing at a tortoiseshell-and-white cat lying under a truck.

'Oh, I must go and talk to it,' exclaimed Lauretta, regardless of my protestations that sooner than doctor a cat-bite all the way, I would leave her behind.

The cat really was rather a remarkable animal. It came over in a Belgian steamer and had so far withstood all efforts to make it return to its native country. There have been no rats on Dover quay since its arrival. Occasionally it goes up to London, perhaps in search of a fresh hunting ground, but it is known by the authorities at Victoria, who always send it back by the next boat train.

After a peaceful crossing to Ostend we slept that night at the Gare Terminus in luxurious rooms with a great deal of gilt about them, and upholstered in red velvet. Private

bathrooms too. The last time we ever afforded ourselves such a luxury. I was up betimes next morning and found the way with difficulty to the garage which was some distance off. Having attended to the bodily needs of the car, calculating petrol for the first time in litres instead of gallons, I drove cautiously to the hotel, very conscious of the warning I found pasted on the wind-screen by the ever-watchful A.A., 'Drive to the right.'

At nine o'clock off we went, again in torrential rain, but we were abroad, motoring into the unknown, and nothing mattered. The road to Bruges was like a racing track. Not so the *pavé* which succeeded it to Ghent. In Brussels we halted and bought our picnic lunch and went on to Namur. Now the A.A. had provided us with a perfectly clear and apparently straightforward route from Namur to Trier, but it eluded us twice, as the clearest of routes have a way of doing when Lauretta and I motor together. The first time, believing ourselves to be near the village of Marche, we stopped and ate our lunch during a cessation of the rain, under some trees and below some high and formidable-looking rocks. Actually we were at Marche-des-Dames and were peacefully resting below the rock from which King Albert fell to his death. Back we went to Namur, and found the right road, only to lose it again before very long. This only meant that we went by Arlon and Luxembourg, which was not the quickest way to Trier, but as it was no day for sight-seeing and we were anxious to arrive before dark, we grudged every extra mile.

I may say here that before leaving I had been presented by the A.A. with a brown document which they gave me to understand was more precious than life itself and had to be stamped at every frontier if I and my car were to be allowed back into England ! This was my Customs Carnet.

At the Belgian frontier a polite official who came running out to the car refused to look at anything but our passports. He took them away, returned them in about half a minute and waved us on. As he would have none of the Customs Carnet, and as I was in no mood to delay, on we went. At Wasserbillig, the German frontier, we got out into the rain. The Germans greeted us with faces grim as death, took the Customs Carnet, rejected our passports and slammed the door in our faces. When they came out of their shelter and returned us the Customs Carnet, we murmured something about 'Geld' and passports, but they told us to go, so go we did without any money declaration. This negligence on their part was to cause us considerable inconvenience later on.

Trier enchanted us. The morning was fine and our bedroom windows looked out on to the magnificent old Roman gate known as the Porta Nigra. We set out after breakfast to find the cathedral. Turning down Sternstrasse we both came to an abrupt halt and gazed spellbound in front of us. The street was short, narrow and dark, and opened suddenly on to a wide market place, gay with flowers and coloured umbrellas. In the bright sunshine it made a brilliant foreground to the wonderful cathedral in pink stone, whose eleventh-century walls towered above it. I shall never forget the beauty of the exterior in that perfect setting. Unfortunately the interior was extremely disappointing. We wandered on to the Roman baths, all in the same lovely pink stone, admiring the magnolia trees in the gardens as we passed. Of course we ended by losing our way, and were later in starting that day's journey than we had intended. It was a lovely drive through what I think must be some of the best of the German country-side. The pasture lands seemed to roll on for miles through hilly and well-wooded

uplands until they faded into the blue of the horizon. Very different from the patchwork effect of English hedges. The villages with their gaily painted houses in blues, greens and mauves, and the soft colours worn by the peasants, were an endless delight to Laretta. Some of the houses were festooned with Nazi flags, which gave them a curiously Oriental appearance. Driving between little wooden houses with the Swastika fluttering from their balconies, one might almost have been in a bazaar in China.

By the middle of the afternoon we found ourselves high up in a lovely pine forest, but with a dense fog descending upon us. I began to get slightly nervous, but as we got lower down the fog turned into the heavy rain with which we were now so familiar. I had meant to reach Heidelberg that day, but we very soon realised that Mannheim would have to be our destination. Now arriving at a large town where you neither know your way about, nor the rules of the road, is not much fun, especially when it is pouring with rain, dark, and the reflection of the lights in the wet pavements dazzling in the extreme. Also the German signposts have a way of pointing diagonally when actually they mean you to go straight on. This caused us to deviate from our course, and instead of going boldly across the huge bridge over the Rhine, we found ourselves in dense traffic in the Hauptstrasse of Ludwigshafen. We tried to turn and were told it was 'verboten.' It would have been a hopeless proposition anyhow. We turned into a side street and found it was 'one way' and the wrong way at that. By the time we got back to the bridge and into Mannheim, I was feeling desperate, and suddenly catching sight of our hotel on the other side of a sort of Piccadilly Circus, I made a bee line for it, regardless of the frantic gesticulations of three fat Germans on the pavement of whom I had asked

the way. We got safely across, however, and nobody came after us to run us in, so all was well.

That night in Mannheim remains in my mind as the one blot on our trip. The noise of trams and the incessant talk of people who seemed to walk about in the streets all night made sleep impossible for me. Overtiredness no doubt had something to do with it, but I wished I had known of the wax balls Lauretta always carried with her, which she said when put in her ears enabled her to sleep through anything, even the noise of an automatic drill. A great idea.

The car had spent the night in a huge garage that, judging by the equestrian frescoes on the walls, would appear to have once been a riding-school. The previous day's journey had made her alarmingly hot and a change of engine oil was advised. An approving look and a comment of 'Owstin, Sehr gut nicht wahr?' made her amenable to the suggestion, and for the first time she submitted to German handling. How it rained that day! It was as if the skies had opened. I did think the sun might have shone just that once to let me see once again the beauty of the blossom in the Neckar valley, a memory of my schooldays. But it was not to be. We reached the old town of Ulm early in the afternoon. Only one incident on that drive remains in my mind. A large lorry was lying overturned by the side of the road, with its load of bricks flung all over the place, and a number of cars were drawn up to see what the damage had been. A little girl was evidently making the most of her opportunity while her parents were absorbed in the accident. A quaint little figure, holding an umbrella high over her head, she darted wildly about, frantically gathering cowslips as if her life depended on it.

Ulm, I believe, is a fascinating place, and in any other circumstances we might have found it so; but as we got

tired of wading in inches of water, we gave it up and went back to our hotel. Dinner was a strange meal. The room seemed full of smoke, men were playing cards, and German officers drinking beer. It was quite full. We sat down at a table marked 'reserviert' because there was nowhere else to sit. Presently we were joined by the fattest man I have ever seen and his wife. They greeted us cheerfully, not resenting our presence at their table in the least. The wife ordered an excellent dinner for herself, but all the husband was allowed apparently was an occasional titbit off her fork. Their friends arrived luckily just as we had finished, and though with great politeness they pressed us to stay, we got up and went to bed. The next day was Sunday, and we were eagerly looking forward to our first sight of Austria and the mountains, in spite of the fact that torrential rain greeted us once more.

'When it does rain on the Continent,' murmured Lauretta, 'it is ten times worse than it is at home.' I doubted this statement, but did not contradict it, as poor Lauretta had suffered from the rain more than I had. With the exception of one afternoon she had spent her time mopping up the drips that came through the so-called sunshine roof and wringing a sopping duster out of the window. It was the only way in which our gallant little car let us down, and she had some excuse for it. We stopped to eat our lunch in lovely pine woods within sight of the snow mountains. It was gloriously fresh and the rain actually stopped for a short time. Feeling revived and strengthened we proceeded to Mittenwald, where we were to cross the frontier into Austria. Before leaving, I had been advised to stay at Mittenwald as a good centre for walks in the Bavarian Alps. How glad I was that I had not taken that advice. The usually peaceful village of the violin-makers was an armed camp.

Soldiers, soldiers, everywhere ! We crawled along, anxiously looking for the Customs house. Suddenly 'Halt !' in a voice like a thunderclap, and we applied all our brakes. The owner of the voice smiled apologetically at the fright he had given us and beckoned to us to follow him. He smiled no longer. There seemed to be something wrong with all our papers. One officer appeared with our passports, protesting volubly that they had not been stamped. Another found the Customs Carnet also not in order ; and when on the top of everything else the original man discovered we had no declaration of money, he wrung his hands in despair. A really fierce-looking official put us through a sort of third-degree examination ; and at this point Lauretta, thinking we were about to be arrested, began protesting vigorously in English, which didn't help matters, as they couldn't understand. At last we were allowed to go, and with what a sigh of relief we got out of Germany. It was as if a beautiful country, full of kindly, well-meaning people, had somehow got into the clutches of some evil power. A few yards farther on and we were with Austrian Customs officers, whose politeness seemed all the greater by contrast. They offered us seats while the papers were being signed, did everything with the minimum of fuss, and actually seemed pleased to see us. Back in our car, we moved off into the Austrian Tyrol at last, and as we lifted up our eyes to the hills our hearts sang.

It was with a feeling of satisfaction, almost amounting to achievement, that we drove into Innsbrück. We had done what we set out to do, and I imagine the feeling is much the same whether one has accomplished a walk from London to Brighton, or climbed Mount Everest. It only remained to find the perfect spot in which to spend a week before we had to cross Europe again. The Gasthaus zur Goldener

Rose in old Innsbrück, seemed a good beginning. It was the kind of hostelry in which we delighted to stay. But towns were not for us. Next morning we went up to Igls, where the sun was blazing and the views magnificent. Up and up we walked, till near the village of Patsch we came upon the perfect camping ground, and decided that here was the place we had come so far to seek. But alas, no one would have us. The only hotel was closed, and our efforts to persuade either the proprietor or the caretakers of a perfectly situated villa near by to take us in were equally unavailing. There was no time to lose. Igls must give us a resting-place. The black-coated waiter and croaking wireless in the lounge of the 'Park Hotel' filled us with dismay, and we fled to the local photographer, who sent us to our good friends the Baiers, in whose comfortable villa we spent a happy week. There were three other guests besides ourselves, a young French couple, and a solitary Dutch lady. The French wife seemed to spend most of her time in Innsbrück and would arrive back very late for dinner. She would burst into the little dining-room, stand for a moment smiling at us all, then rush forward to embrace her husband, bursting into a torrent of conversation the while. We all felt the stimulus of that gay vitality which is so peculiarly French. Mizzi, the servant, with her brilliant jade-green skirt, loud voice and beaming countenance, did the entire work of the house as well as cooking and serving the meals. If the evening meal was long in coming, and indeed we never knew when to expect it, it was impossible to blame Mizzi when one thought of all she had to do. So Lauretta and I used to knit and read, and the Dutch lady play innumerable games of patience, while waiting for our dinner. She occupied a sort of raised pulpit in a corner of the room, while we and the French couple had small tables beside the walls,

whose only decorations consisted of stuffed eagles and stoats, though there was of course a crucifix in one corner. It was a very odd-room. If, however, the dining-room was more queer than beautiful, our bedrooms left nothing to be desired with their perfect beds, hot and cold water, and balconies looking on to the loveliest of views.

We walked for miles in that lovely country, going out for the whole day with books and knitting and lunching off omelets and wine in country inns. Our only expedition by car was to the Aachensee. Our kind host was very apprehensive about it. There would be snow, he said, it would also be very steep and it was too early in the year to go. Probably all quite true, we replied, but nevertheless we were going. He was right about the steepness. The car boiled and panted on her ascent but gallantly took us to the top, and what a reward was ours. There lay the Aachensee like a brilliant jewel, surrounded by the snows. Never could it possibly have looked more lovely. So much for taking our chance. I sat down at once to try and put an idea of that unbelievable colour on paper. Quite unsuccessfully, of course. The water was a blend of turquoise and emerald, perhaps the blue of a matrix opal would describe it best, while the banks of the lake were studded with the little gentian '*verna*,' the loveliest of its kind. All too soon our week at Igls came to an end. We had planned to return over the Arlberg Pass, which Thos. Cook had assured us was open. Once more our hosts were discouraging and seemed touchingly concerned for our safety, but we felt our star was in the ascendant, and bad weather a thing of the past.

The day of our departure was brilliant. A day of such exquisite beauty that the journey would have been well worth while for that alone. We sailed along, pausing at

the summit of the Pass, near St. Christophe, to watch a group of skiers practising. I turned to look at the mountains we were leaving, murmured to Lauretta, 'Look your last on all things lovely,' and gently moved on round a corner. Scarcely had we gone two hundred yards when we found the road ahead of us had not been cleared of snow, and a little farther on still a big car had skidded right across it and was perilously near the precipitous edge. The occupant was a Belgian with his wife and grown-up son. I do not know how long they had been in that plight, but somehow they had managed to get hold of a man with a spade, who, however, did not seem to be doing much good. They did manage to get the car slightly straighter so that I could just have got past had not an Austrian car at that moment driven up and come to a standstill on the other side. The driver was both incompetent and truculent and insisted on my passing the Belgian car first and going as near the edge of the precipice as I could. This I did, though it made his own task more difficult, as he now had to pass me as well as the Belgian car. About four women got out of his car and a white poodle, the latter giving a grotesque touch to the situation by dancing about all over the place in a disconcerting way, nobody caring in the least what happened to it. It was a proper mix-up, everyone talking volubly at the same time, and if it had not been for the arrival of the snow plough with four strong men on board, I cannot think what would have happened. I trembled for the fate of our little car standing on the brink of a precipice, over which a touch would have sent her. After much manœuvring, however, and with the help of the men who put on a spare wheel with chains, the Austrian got past, and we breathed again, though I did not enjoy starting my own car on that slippery surface and so near the edge.

When we were safely down, Lauretta and I bathed our faces and hands in a stream, and lay flat on our backs in ferns and heather by the side of the road and rested. We then went on to Bludenz, where we spent two nights. As we got there we met a funeral procession, consisting apparently of the entire population, streaming through the narrow streets, headed by the priests and chief mourners. Perhaps it was an unfortunate omen; anyhow, our luck changed rather noticeably afterwards. We stopped at the Gasthaus der Eiserne Kreuz. There was a billiard table in the dining-room and it was in constant use while we dined. The Austrian variety of the game consists of making cannons, there being no pockets in the table. A fat young man in a red sweater, who I afterwards saw in charge of a petrol pump down the road, seemed to carry all before him.

Next day we explored the Montafon valley. Though beautiful in its way we did not think it could compare with the grand scenery through which we had come. The following day we said good-bye to Austria and crossed the German frontier at Lindau. Our intention had been to spend two nights in the Black Forest, but the moment we got into Germany the skies became overcast and we never saw the sun again while we were there. After a night at Holzsteig, about ten miles short of Freiburg, we awakened to find it snowing. This gradually became worse till it developed into a real blizzard, and after the worst drive in my experience we managed to reach Heidelberg with the car a sheet of ice. A party of English schoolboys were caught in the same blizzard, very close to where we passed, and five of them lost their lives.

From Heidelberg we went to Mainz, from there following the banks of the Rhine, to Coblenz. Enormous army lorries passed and repassed us, the rain came down in torrents,

and neither of us saw any beauty in the Rhine. Lauretta was distinctly disappointed. What was the matter with it or with us? As a schoolgirl I had come down the Rhine in a steamer to Rotterdam, finding in it all the romance and loveliness of which I had read. That memory has now been spoiled.

Coblenz was a pleasant town, and in the evening as we walked along a beautiful avenue of limes by the riverside, our spirits rose and Germany seemed a better place.

Lauretta was anxious to see Brussels and we decided to spend our last morning there, so we intended reaching it next day. Accordingly I filled up the car with petrol to the value of all the German marks in my possession, having been told I would not be allowed to take them out of the country. This was all very well, but it left me without a single pfennig for any emergency. We had not contemplated any emergency, certainly not the one with which we were confronted. A hilly, lonely road, across desolate country so deep in snow that we could only go ten miles an hour most of the way, and that in blinding rain that threatened to turn to snow. After ninety miles of exhausting driving, perhaps I was not at my best; anyhow, I turned just too late at a signpost, could not get the car round, and was suddenly faced with a wall that seemed to spring from nowhere and into it we went. Down it came like a pack of cards. Our buffer was bent, and headlights smashed, but nothing worse, though I felt we had had a narrow escape.

At Huy we had a rest and some refreshment, and proceeded to Brussels with spirits somewhat damped by this unfortunate incident. Having damaged the poor car on the last day, when she had behaved so well and never let us down, mattered at the moment far more to me than the fact that I had nearly killed Lauretta. The garage at Brussels made

the car look respectable again, and we reached Ostend in a downpour about five o'clock, having spent the morning wandering about Brussels. We chose a comfortable if humble hotel, and guided by the porter I drove the car into a garage to be greeted by a cheerful 'Hullo, back again?' and behold, it was the same one I had left her in on our arrival. That evening, as we were reading in the lounge, the manager came up to us with a face as long as a fiddle. 'Madame,' he said, 'I think there has been some mistake.' My heart sank. Whatever was the matter? Which of our errors could be going to come back on us now? 'You have entered in the register to have been born in nineteen hundred and thirty-six.' Lauretta laughed aloud while I rectified the error.

Our friend the embarkation officer at Dover also remembered us and greeted us warmly, and so ended our little adventure. The friendliness we met with in every place makes me long to be off abroad in a car again. Knowledge can be acquired, but experiences must be lived, and memories are personal things that cannot be passed on. To my mind they are the best investment we can any of us make. Good and bad, all are enriching, and many of them are golden.

TWO POEMS.

THE JUNIPERS.

*Gray the slow sky darkens
Above the downland track.
Closing the long valley
Rises a hill's smooth back,*

*Its slope all darkly sprinkled
With ancient junipers,
Each a small, secret tree :
There not a breath stirs.*

*I fear those waiting shapes
Of wry, blue-berried wood.
They make a twilight in my mind,
As if they drained my blood,*

*As if a spirit were prisoned
Within each writhen stem,
And no one knows their kindred
Nor what frustrated them.*

*Along the empty valley
Like a ghost go I ;
My footsteps and my beating heart
Nothing signify,*

*Lost into nameless ages
That come, slow cloud on cloud,
From history's beginning
And all the future shroud.*

STILL MORNING.

*Here alone I sit,
And suddenly I seem
With all I am on earth
To have become a dream,*

*Mingling with all the dreams
That wander through the air
Out of the souls of men,
None knows or guesses where.*

*No human sound around !
Yet the air is full
Of vast want, sighs, desires,
Hopes, invisible.*

*Alone each thinks to be,
Yet separate is none.
Of such a quivering web
The human soul is spun.*

*Loose as the idle clouds
My thoughts float as they may.
Now I am here, and now
Ten thousand miles away.*

LAURENCE BINYON.

WILLIAM IV : THE FORGOTTEN KING.

BY DERECK HUDSON

I.

POPULAR opinion in the last hundred years has not been particularly kind to the memory of King William IV. The general tendency, however, has been rather to ignore him altogether than to revive the storm of satirical abuse that whirled around his somewhat wooden features (Charles Greville said that his head was 'shaped like a pine-apple') during certain periods of his life. This neglect of one who had no great intellect, and who often behaved foolishly, may be justified in part : but at least the redeeming features spoken of by the *Annual Register* for 1837, 'the kindness, the openness, the simplicity of tastes and habits which so remarkably distinguished him,' are not to be lightly disregarded. He was certainly an eccentric, and no paragon of morals, but he won the affection of men : Nelson liked him as a sailor ; and sceptical Glenbervie once remarked that 'his manner was frank yet dignified—even interesting and entertaining.' Perhaps it was Madame von Bülow who really hit upon his most dominant characteristic, when she said that he was 'altogether such a *cheerful* King.'

William Henry, the third son of George III and Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, was born at Buckingham House on August 21, 1765. There is little news of his early days. Fitzgerald records a lavish distribution of porter to the crowd at his christening ; and he came forward as a

pioneer by being successfully vaccinated at the age of two. The rest is silence—and a succession of tutors, Messrs. Arnold and Majendie giving place to the Swiss Colonel Budé, whose ‘sarcastic sneer’ was so objectionable to Fanny Burney, but whose religion, according to one of his biographers, ‘was founded on the firm base of unadulterated Christianity.’

At the age of thirteen William began to attract the attention of visitors to Kew and Windsor as a lively and intelligent boy. His ‘surprisingly manly and clever conversation’ won Bishop Butler’s heart, and Mrs. Chapone found him ‘sensible and engaging.’ George III soon decided that the temptations of Court life, which were proving so disastrous to his elder brothers, should not be allowed to endanger his character also. Negotiations were entered into with the Admiralty ; and on June 15, 1779, the boy was dressed in a midshipman’s low-crowned hat, blue jacket and trousers, and taken to Spithead, whence he presently followed his ‘hair trunk’ into the murky depths of Admiral Digby’s flagship, the *Prince George*.

Life in the navy of Marryat’s day was not easy. William might have been excused if his heart failed him as he climbed down the steep ladder into the steerage, smelt the stench of bilge water for the first time, stumbled through the litter of boots, bottles, dirty clothes, on the floor of the ‘berth’ which he was to share with half a dozen others, and sat down to an evening meal of small beer and ‘sea biscuit.’ On his father’s instructions, he got no preferential treatment ; indeed, the fact of his royal parentage was probably more of a hindrance than a help. Yet he seems to have taken his initiation well enough ; for when someone mockingly enquired by what name he was rated in the ship’s books, he stoutly replied that he ‘was entered as Prince William Henry, but you may call me William Guelph’ ; and later showed

himself so pugnacious towards anyone who annoyed him that he soon became a very popular 'mid.'

Towards the end of the year the ships of Admiral Rodney's squadron, the *Prince George* among them, took part in operations for the relief of Gibraltar, and assisted at the defeat of a Spanish detachment under Don Juan de Langara. Later the disappointed Spaniard paid a visit to Admiral Digby, and was introduced to the Prince. The incident is thus described by Lord Keith : 'The Spaniard, astonished to see the son of a monarch doing the duty of a petty officer, exclaimed, "Well does Great Britain merit the empire of the seas, when the humblest stations in her navy are filled by princes of the blood!"'

From the great number of flattering anecdotes available, it is difficult to obtain a balanced view of the young sailor. 'In the most inclement seasons, in dark and stormy nights, he went aloft to hand or reef the top-sails,' says Ralfe in his *Naval Biography*, 'and had the character of being the best midshipman on board the ship.' But during the following year, while the *Prince George* was attached to the Channel fleet, frequent opportunities for shore leave—involving, as they always did, gay parties with his brothers at Vauxhall and Ranelagh—seem to have had a bad effect on his work. His father became alarmed, ordered a change of ship, and sent him for a cruise off the North American coast.

He was away from England for nearly two years. In 1782 we find him at the West Indies, in Lord Hood's flagship, the *Barfleur*. Receptions, entertainments, and 'respectful addresses' now awaited him wherever he landed. At Port Royal, Jamaica, the merchants and planters raised a corps of cavalry 'for the express purpose of attending him,' to which they gave the name of 'Prince William Henry's regiment.' From Jamaica he proceeded to New York, and

on landing there became the first English Prince of the Blood to set foot in America.

At that time the country was in the closing stages of the War of Independence. Not unnaturally, any move that might create a diversion, and so hasten the end of the conflict, was eagerly looked for by both sides. Thus it happened that the sight of this amiable, highly important young man, wandering round the city of New York without a guard, proved a severe temptation to a certain Colonel Matthias Ogden. Colonel Ogden wrote to George Washington, suggesting that it would be a good idea to kidnap the Prince. On March 28, 1782, Washington replied :

Sir,

The spirit of enterprise, so conspicuous in your plan for surprising in their quarters and bringing off the Prince William Henry and Admiral Digby merits applause ; and you have my authority to make the attempt, in any manner and at such a time, as your own judgment shall direct. I am fully persuaded that it is unnecessary to caution you against offering insult or indignity to the persons of the Prince and Admiral, should you be so fortunate as to capture them . . .

Colonel Ogden was not so fortunate. William remained at large ; soon he was off to sea again : in the following year he sailed back to England in the *Fortunée*.

II.

‘ The transition from the orlopdeck of a man of war to the Court of St. James,’ says Robert Huish, William’s long-winded biographer, ‘ must have been as striking as the sudden light of heaven bursting suddenly upon an individual, who has been for some time confined in total darkness.’ The transition may have been striking, but it failed to bring

about a rather desirable change in William's demeanour, for he now trod the salons of St. James's with the same non-chalance and seaman-like roll as he once strode the ' orlop-deck ' of the *Barfleur*. In short, he wanted manners ; and therefore it was resolved, as soon as he had passed his examination for third lieutenant, that he should pay a prolonged visit to Germany, under the guidance of Colonel (now General) Budé and a gentleman named Captain Merrick. Queen Charlotte thought a great deal of Teuton discipline, and hoped for good results : Huish accuses her of scheming to divest her son of the ' noble and independent character of the Englishman,' and put upon him the ' stiff, haughty, and supercilious carriage of the German prince ' !

The party left Buckingham House on July 31, 1783. The crossing from Greenwich was rough ; but the Prince, as Huish observed, ' was " every inch a sailor," and bore the buffeting of the waves with that marked coolness and indifference which, under similar circumstances, are the sailor's invariable characteristics.'

They landed at Stade, and went on to Hanover, where they were joined by William's brother, the Bishop of Osnaburg.¹ The days passed very pleasantly at Hanover. After many languid yawns and protests, the royal brothers allowed themselves to be dressed by their valets at eight o'clock ; in the morning they paid one or two calls, or strolled over to the stables to look at the famous stud of cream-coloured horses ; then wandered along to the *marktplatz* to inspect a few troops, before sitting down to an enormous meal with some high official which lasted all afternoon. The evenings were devoted to gambling,

¹ Frederick August, later Duke of York, the second son of George III (d. 1827). Through the influence of his father as Elector of Hanover, he was appointed Bishop of Osnaburg at the age of six months. To what extent his diocese benefited by his ministrations is not recorded.

dancing, or the theatre. No wonder that Captain Merrick, who was trying to make William study Vauban on Fortifications, despaired of the educational results of the trip.

The Grand Tour continued. At Berlin, Frederick the Great was sadly disappointed that William had not read *Candide* : William admired the Emperor's coiffure, particularly the long tapering tail with its famous curl, and resolved never again to appear in a bag-wig. At Lunenburg, it seemed that he was going to have his first taste of romance, for he drove the beautiful Maria Schindbach behind one of his father's cream-coloured horses at a *Schlittenfahrt*, and waltzed with her every night ; but Maria had become attached to Captain Merrick, who in due course married her ; and, when he got back to Hanover, the young ladies of the Court said that William 'seemed to know as much about love as an oyster.' However, there is good reason to believe that he had his 'affairs.'

The traveller returned to England in the spring of 1785. The same evening that he arrived home, the Prince of Wales came round to Buckingham House, and invited him to join one of his parties at Carlton House.

'Eh, what ?' exclaimed the King. 'Take William away : take William away : he shan't go !—he shan't go !—just arrived from Hanover—want to know how things are going on there—fine stud ! fine stud !'

In vain his sons pleaded with him to reconsider his decision.

'Shan't go ! shan't go !' said their father, '—better with his mother to-night.'

For the next few years William lived the regular life of a lieutenant in the Navy. In 1786 he took command of the *Pegasus*, joining Nelson's squadron off Dominica. 'He has his foibles as well as private men, but they are overbalanced

by his virtues,' wrote Nelson to Captain Locker ; ' in his professional line he is superior to near two-thirds, I am sure, of the list.' It seems a pity that this efficient sailor should not have been allowed to devote his whole life to the sea ; but this was not to be, for on his creation as Duke of Clarence, with an income of £12,000 a year, his father considered that the time had come for him to settle down and adorn the social life of the country. He fulfilled only one more active engagement in the Navy : between 12th May and 27th November, 1790, he captained the *Valiant*. But this goes a long way towards disproving an extraordinary legend concerning his activities in that year which is still widely believed in Germany.

In 1880, the publication of a volume of correspondence found among the papers of Baron Reichenbach¹ caused a sensation in England. The book purports to contain several letters from Caroline von Linsingen to her son-in-law Herr Teubner, together with one letter written to her by Prince William, and has an introduction—the work of an anonymous editor—which claims that William and Caroline were duly married in 1791.

This marriage, if it ever took place, could have had no historical importance ; for the Royal Marriage Act would have invalidated its consequences for England, and probably for Hanover. But the story, if we accepted it as true, would throw an interesting sidelight on the character of the Prince, whom no one had hitherto suspected of a strain of Wertherian sentiment. A perusal of the letters, however, leaves little doubt that they have been rather clumsily faked.

We are told that Caroline's father, General von Linsingen,

¹ *Caroline von Linsingen and William the Fourth. Unpublished love-letters discovered among the literary remains of Baron Reichenbach.* Translated by Theophilus G. Arundel (Sonnenschein & Allen).

was on terms of intimacy with the Grand Ducal House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz ; that William first met his daughter on April 13, 1790 ; and that ' it was not long before they learned to love one another passionately.' It is alleged that the marriage took place in August, 1791, but was not consummated until 1792, in which year Caroline miscarried of a child—and that soon afterwards, when the marriage became known to William's parents, the couple separated.

Apart from the fact that there is no evidence of William having been in Germany during these years, and that he was certainly at sea during most of the summer of 1790, when his amour is supposed to have been at its height, the chief argument against the genuineness of the correspondence is to be found in the letters themselves. The characters of the drama—apocryphal peers like William's ' best man,' ' Lord Dutton,' persons like ' Lady Hinxley,' and the clergyman (appropriately named Parsons) who is supposed to have united the couple—would not be out of place in the cast of one of Flotow's or Lortzing's operettas ; in this context they are unconvincing. Its style of high sentiment makes the whole story seem hysterical : a dizzy record of languishings and heart-burnings. Caroline's description of her wedding hardly inspires confidence :

' William's responses were given in a clear and solemn tone, yet he trembled no less violently than myself. Indescribable were my feelings as, in the grey haze of morning (it was between five and six o'clock), I gave myself up to my beloved. Was it the sacred ceremony that kept me from perishing from my mingled anguish and bliss ? All onlookers wept with emotion.'

Neither do these excerpts from William's letter to Caroline :

' What were your words as I read that grand passage in Fordyce

to you, which seemed so to carry you away ? Did you not say that your love for me had fired you with a courage and a strength that nothing could overcome ? . . . 'twas but two months ago that you fell down lifeless at the sudden sight of my portrait, that Dutton held before you . . . O wife, my wife, I am ever yours, never shall another call your William husband.'

There is no wish to discredit the memory of Caroline von Linsingen, who subsequently married a Dr. Meineke, and died at the early age of forty-five—and who goes down to history in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* as '*eine wegen ihrer wunderbaren Schicksale merkwürdige Frau.*' But, as *The Times* commented in 1880, 'the solitary argument in favour of the authenticity of the letters is the *a priori* improbability that any writer casting about for the centre of a melodramatic love fable should have selected so exceedingly unpromising a hero for a tale of passion as good King William the Fourth.'

III.

A keen sailor on board his ship has never lacked admiration ; but the better the sailor, the more worthy of ridicule he often appears when stranded ashore. The Admiralty now treated all William's painstaking suggestions in naval affairs with complete contempt ; and when war broke out with France his request for a commission was ignored. Unutterably weary of the life at Clarence Lodge, Richmond, he diverted himself with the society of a young lady called Polly Finch, to whom he read *The Lives of the Admirals* aloud. Glenbervie reports that Miss Finch 'bore this through one half of the work, but finding that as much remained, her patience sank under it, and a quarrel and separation ensued.'

Excellent material, this, for the cartoonists and pamphle-

teers ; they began to sharpen their pencils and keep an eye on the Duke. But, at the moment, his efforts to improve conditions in the Navy appealed to the general public ; and the following quotations from the popular song of ' Duke William's Ramble ' are not unfriendly. The author of the ' Ramble ' imagined that the Duke, while carousing ' incognito ' at a tavern on the outskirts of London, was seized by the Press Gang, hustled on board a warship, and, when he protested, ordered a flogging.

*' Then strip, they cry'd, the Duke reply'd,
I do not like your laws, sir,
I ne'er shall strip for to be whip't,
So strip me if you dare, sir.*

*O then came down the boatswain's mate,
The Duke for to undress, sir,
But quickly he did espy
The star upon his breast, sir,
Then on their bended knees they fell,
Yea and for mercy loud did call,
The Duke replies you're villains all,
For using thus poor seamen.*

*No wonder why my father he,
Can't well man all his shipping,
It's by your basely using them,
And them always a whipping ;
But for the future sailors all
Shall have good usage great and small,
They heard the news together all
And cry'd God save Duke William.'*

This is hardly a respectful song ; but it certainly shows some recognition of courage and good intention, which is more than could have been accorded to William's brothers. His language and manners were often an embarrassment to

Society, but he brought back with him from his ten years at sea a kind of solid dependability, which did not desert him throughout his lifetime.

In March, 1790, William watched a young actress create the part of 'Little Pickle' in a play called *The Spoil'd Child* at Drury Lane. She was a great success with the audience, and an even greater success with the Duke. Indeed, so successful was she, that she lived with him for the next twenty years and bore him ten children.

The actress, who was called Mrs. Dorothy Jordan, was already the mother of five children : she was not, however, married, the 'Mrs.' having been added to obtain a legacy from a righteous aunt. Dorothy Jordan suffered under a moral reputation which was undeservedly bad. Her first child had been the result of an unhappy incident in Ireland with a blackguard named Daly ('the scene of which,' according to her biographer, Boaden, 'is still pointed out with strong *shudders* near Limerick'). Richard Ford, the father of the other children, had failed to honour his promise to marry her.

If her private life had been unfortunate, her public life was beyond praise. Few actresses have equalled, none excelled, the popularity of this generous and good-natured woman. She had not the advantage of great beauty. But, in the words of the critic of the *Morning Herald*, 'her face, if not beautiful, is said by some to be pretty, and by some pleasing, intelligent, or impressive.'

Above all, it was her laugh that was the joy of her admirers. The artificiality of stage laughter can be the reverse of charming, but hers was 'social and genuine.' 'It clips and tickles the dialogue,' said Leigh Hunt. 'It breaks in and about her words, like sparkles of bubbling water ; and when the whole stream comes out nothing can be fuller of heart

and soul.' Although her reputation was made in rompish or ' breeches ' parts, it was Lamb's opinion that these were outdone by her ' plaintive ' rôles ; there may have been justice in the lines of the contemporary poet,

*' Till Viola beautified the scene
And Rosalind the bower ;
Thy blossoms, JORDAN, had we seen,
But not thy fairest flower.'*

This, then, was the lady who bulked so largely in the life of Duke William of Clarence. The reader will excuse a touch of irony in the phrase : for it is true that we are told that her figure, ' always inclining to the en bon point,' eventually ' assumed a corpulency which did not assimilate with her theatrical avocations.'

IV.

*' Bachelor bluff, bachelor bluff,
High for a heart that is rugged and tough !'*

It may be that Mrs. Jordan was reminded of this chorus (from one of her most popular songs, ' The Camp Medley ') when she settled down to her life of ' blameless irregularity ' with the Duke. Unfortunately the country as a whole seemed to have no use for bluntness or toughness ; and even when William took up farming in Bushey Park, no call came to this Cincinnatus. Equally unsuccessful were his frequent speeches in the House of Lords, where a smug defence of the Slave Trade lost him a few friends. So far as progress was concerned, he had to content himself with a formal promotion to Vice-Admiral, to Admiral of the Blue, and finally to Admiral of the Fleet.

Mrs. Jordan, in the intervals of producing a brood of Fitzclarences, continued to work on the stage. Her

income was often useful to the Duke, who found it hard to support a growing family and pay off old debts at the same time. Their mode of living, with the exception of a sensational birthday party in 1806, was not extravagant ; Dorothy Jordan made an eminently practical housewife. Let us cite a paragraph from the biography of ' A Confidential Friend ' :

' So unostentatious and truly domestic were the habits of Mrs. Jordan, after her new and exalted connection, that we have frequently witnessed her arrival, in a plain yellow chariot, at Miss Tuting's, a milliner in St. James's Street, where she would alight with an infant in her arms ; and during her stay, frequently change the linen of the little one in the shop, while freely conversing with the person in attendance to wait upon customers.'

They were an affectionate couple ; loyalty was one of Mrs. Jordan's qualities ; she said that the Duke was ' an example to half the husbands and fathers in the world.' In 1809, after the battle of Talavera, in which one of her sons took part, she wrote to a friend : ' Five thousand killed !—the Duke at Brighton !—I went to bed, but not to sleep . . . The Duke set out at five o'clock on the Tuesday, to be the first to relieve me of my misery.'

This mutual interdependence makes their mysterious parting in 1811 the more puzzling. It is probable that the Duke's mother, Queen Charlotte, took advantage of one of her son's occasional quarrels with Mrs. Jordan about money matters, to urge him to reconsider the whole question of his finances and, if possible, to marry an heiress. The association of twenty years had held together on a basis of affection rather than of love ; nevertheless, the separation came as a severe blow to Mrs. Jordan. She admitted that she received ' most generous and liberal provision.' But her situation was that of the old woman who lived in a shoe,

and it was in straitened circumstances that she died at St. Cloud a few years later. (Only the generosity of English residents in Paris secured for her the tribute of a decent burial, and for the mourners a ' cold collation ' after it.)

One would have thought that if anything could have stirred William's emotions it would have been the parting from, and subsequent death of, Mrs. Jordan ; yet they seem to have had as little outward effect on him as a wooden spoon in the Christmas pudding. Following his mother's advice, he began to force his attentions on a series of rich young ladies. Among those who spurned his advances was Miss Tilney Long, and Peter Pindar records :

*' From W-nst-d, back to town he flew,
Swift as four steeds could carry him,
And in a devil of a stew,
That Tiln-y would not marry him.'*

A similar lack of success attended his efforts with Princess Anne of Denmark. Here Peter Pindar pictures him as receiving the news with an optimism born of vanity :

*' His Royal Highness, who, God knows,
Was ne'er deficient in invention,
Most stoically blew his nose,
And said with gracious condescension—*

*" If I have fail'd, as from your looks
I may be borne out in implying,
Make it no secret, man, adzooks !
A thousand girls for me are sighing ! " '*

The girls may well have sighed, but certainly it was not for love. William, despite repeated efforts, remained an unhappy bachelor, gallantly but clumsily attempting to educate his children and launch them into society. In 1817 his conventional asthma and gout were aggravated by an

upset stomach, possibly caused by over-indulgence in the fashionable vegetarian diet of Dr. Banyan. His mother was shocked at his appearance, when he answered her summons to Bath to take the waters, and finally decided that her son's marriage to a good, respectable wife was overdue : the result was the arrival at Grillon's Hotel, Albemarle Street, on a summer's evening of the following year, of the Princess Amelia Adelaide of Saxe Meiningen.

It is unlikely that William realised, as he clattered up to the hotel in his carriage a few hours later, that he was on the threshold of a life of quiet happiness such as he had never experienced before. The Princess Adelaide was not precisely beautiful, but she had qualities of tact and charm which enabled her to get on very well with those awkward 'step-children' of her husband, and a considerable common sense, which helped her to reform his financial affairs in a truly miraculous manner. After their marriage, life at Bushey was a calm well-ordered affair ; the Duke wandered through his greenhouses ; the Duchess plied her needle and thread ; and the guests admired the kitchen garden. Adelaide was well satisfied with a modest household, for she had known the reverse of comfort at home : Errol said that her old bedroom in the palace at Meiningen was 'a hole that an English housemaid would think it a hardship to sleep in.'

Two unfortunate incidents marred the eleven years that elapsed between the Duke's wedding and his unexpected accession to the throne. The first occurred during the trial of Queen Caroline in 1820, when the Duke, who was one of the Judges in his brother's cause, was accused of exerting personal influence among his fellow-Peers to induce them to vote for the Bill. 'Could I, my Lords, call on that individual,' thundered Denman, the Queen's Solicitor-General, as he pointed to the figure of the Duke in the gallery,

‘I would say, “Come forth, thou foul slanderer, and meet me face to face !”’

The second, in 1828, concerned his resignation from the office of Lord High Admiral. After the death of the Duke of York in 1827, it was felt that the Duke of Clarence, as heir to the throne, should be given some dignified employment which would bring him into the public eye ; Canning remembered his love of the sea, and revived for his benefit a post that had been in abeyance for a hundred years. But the Duke refused to serve only as an ornament ; he had a disturbing habit of hoisting his official flag in the yacht *Royal Sovereign*, and sailing along the south coast to inspect the fleet without the required consent of the Admiralty ; he also had ideas about promoting young officers, and pensioning the older men, which were far too sensible for Whitehall. His brother, the King, wrote to him : ‘You are in error from beginning to end.’ The Duke issued a final batch of promotions, and threw in his hand. ‘I retire,’ he said, ‘with the most perfect satisfaction to my mind.’

‘Altogether he seems a kind-hearted, well-meaning, not stupid, burlesque, bustling old fellow,’ noted Greville, ‘and if he doesn’t go mad may make a very decent King.’ William remained eccentric, but he did not go mad ; for this blessing he had much to thank Queen Adelaide.

V.

When George IV died on June 26, 1830, Sir Henry Halford, hurrying to Bushey at seven in the morning, found the new King pottering about the garden in an old coat and beaver hat. Soon he dressed himself as an Admiral and drove up to town, vainly protesting that he wished to be known as Henry IX, and not as William IV. Apart from this little difficulty, he behaved very well until the time came

to sign the declaration before the Privy Council, when he exclaimed roundly : ‘ This is a damned bad pen you have given me ! ’—an incident which greatly shocked Mr. Creevey, but which we may be able to look upon with indulgence.

William’s popularity increased daily ; but he was still an uncrowned king when political events forced him into one of the least enviable situations ever endured by a British monarch. He has been held to blame for the long delay over the passing of the great Reform Bill of 1832 ; yet an unprejudiced reading of his correspondence gives the impression that it was largely owing to his honesty and common sense that it finally went through the Lords without an increase of the peerage—indeed, that it ever passed at all. The mob that smashed the Duke of Wellington’s windows at Apsley House, smashed his Tory government as well ; and though the people chanted with delight :

‘ . . . our King has taken his own way, sir,
And sent the black Duke to the swing, and
substituted Grey, sir,’

we know with what regret William parted from the Duke. With equal regret he parted from his own Tory convictions, as he slowly became persuaded of the necessity of reform. Between the King and Earl Grey, however, there grew up a mutual confidence, which was strengthened rather than weakened by Grey’s discovery that William was not to be ‘ managed ’ as his brother had been.

Both King and Queen showed that they had minds of their own. William ordered an inexpensive Coronation : the expenses came to less than £30,000 ; the previous one had cost £240,000. But the Queen was obstinate in her refusal to have a hired crown, even though Greville reminded

her that George IV had worn one : ' I do not like it, and I have got jewels enough, so I will have them made up for myself,' she said. The King caused a little more trouble when he refused to be kissed by the bishops, and ordered that part of the Coronation service to be struck out ; but, on the remonstrations of the Archbishop, he eventually relented. The Coronation was a success. The crowds at Liverpool sung a revised version of the National Anthem, which went :

*' God save our Adelaide !
Long on our flags display'd
Be her name seen !'*

The Queen was popular with the country as a whole, and no doubt as a royal mother would have been still more so ; it was a lasting regret that her two daughters died in infancy. She made an excellent hostess. Miss Mary Clitherow, in one of her letters, describes a ball which was given for over five hundred guests at Kew : ' a seat for everyone, a napkin, three china plates, three silver forks, knife and spoon. The waiters had only to remove your plate . . . Weippert's beautiful band. I quite longed to dance . . . they had waltzes, quadrilles, gallopade, and reels.' (The only criticism was from the irrepressible Greville, who said that she was a prude because she would not let the ladies come *décolletées* to her parties.)

Other evenings, at St. James's, were less exciting ; they were usually spent in signing state papers. Often the King had to stop to put his hand in hot water. Once he turned to Miss Clitherow and said : ' My dear madame, when I began signing I had 48,000 signatures my poor brother should have signed. I did them all, but I made a determination never to lay my head on my pillow till I had signed every-

thing I ought on the day. It is cruel suffering, but, thank God ! 'tis only cramp.'

Whenever they appeared in public, the royal couple were greeted with enthusiasm. Typical was a visit which they paid to Lewes at the beginning of their reign, when local societies (such as 'The Stag Club,' 'The Veterans,' and 'The Carpenters' Club') lined the streets, and 'the different bodies cheered after the manner of firing by platoons on field-days, while the dense crowd of the people maintained a general huzza.' They drove to '*The Friars*, the residence of Nehemiah Wimble, Esquire, where an elegant *déjeuner à la fourchette* was provided at the expense of the borough.' It was a great day for Lewes: Mr. Mantell presented the King with his history of the town (2 vols., 4to); while the hospitable Mr. Wimble received an addition to his arms of a *Lion of England, borne in chief*.

In her public appearances the Queen introduced a note of informality which was rare among contemporary royalty: when she dined with the Clitherows at Brentford she stood for five minutes chatting with some haymakers in the garden, 'which gave the natives time to get her dress by heart—it was very simple, all white, little bonnet and feathers.'

As the years went on, the shadow of ill-health—torturing attacks of asthma, alarming fatigue—fell darkly across her husband's life. William lived as simply as ever. He rose at ten minutes to eight exactly, and made his breakfast of 'a dish of coffee and a couple of fingers'; then vanished behind the pages of *The Times* or the *Morning Post*, whence came muttered comments on the affairs of the moment, listeners hearing 'That's a damned lie' and other intriguing remarks. All through the morning he worked with his secretary; at two o'clock he lunched off a couple of cutlets

and two glasses of sherry. Afterwards came a drive till dinner-time ; and at eleven he retired to bed. ‘He is in dreadfully low spirits,’ said Adolphus Fitzclarence, ‘and cannot rally at all.’

When, in May, 1837, his last illness came upon him, he refused with his usual obstinacy to stay in bed ; he even insisted on getting up an hour earlier than usual. ‘I feel it my duty to keep well as long as I can,’ he told the Queen. An effort was made to take him down to Brighton, but his swollen legs and difficult breathing rendered this impossible.

On the 18th of June he was dying ; but he had not forgotten the anniversary of Waterloo. ‘Let me live over this memorable day,’ he said to the doctor—‘I shall never live to see another sunset.’ From the Archbishop of Canterbury he received the Communion, and waved good-bye to him from his bed with ‘God bless you—a thousand, thousand thanks !’ Two days later his last words were spoken to him : ‘Believe me, I am a religious man.’

So passed a ‘Sailor King,’ who made no great mark on English history. The death-bed at Windsor is less vivid in our minds than the image of the young Princess, in her dressing-gown, who first received the news of it.

But, when we survey his life, we may choose to overlook the moral lapses, the eccentricities ; and rather to remember the tribute of Earl Grey, that ‘one more sincerely devoted to the interest of his country, more attentive to his duty upon every occasion, there never did exist.’ This should not blind us to the deficiencies of the man who could welcome a new Bishop with the words : ‘My Lord, I do not mean to interfere in any way with your vote in Parliament except on one subject, the Jews, and I trust I may depend on your always voting against them.’

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

BY CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE.¹

THE burning of the Crystal Palace on November the 30th of last year was more than a mere pyrotechnical display, but something less than an architectural disaster. The building was a noble one, and its history was full of interest : but few were its visitors, and the atmosphere was one of difficulty and decay, while a third of the building had been burnt already, seventy years earlier, leaving a lop-sided remnant. And yet, to those whose curiosity could drag them all the way to Sydenham, it was a strange excitement to survey that vast and lovely palace, the pride and delight of a whole generation of Victorians.

In the year 1850, the protagonists of the forthcoming International Exhibition, of whom Prince Albert was by no means the most active, were confronted with the problem of housing a display of quite unprecedented size in a building which had to be temporary because it was to occupy the sacred soil of Hyde Park. Their difficulties in this respect become more painful as the time drew nearer. A Building Committee, on which Barry and Brunel represented the best of contemporary architecture and engineering, proved unable to cope with the problem. A public competition elicited 245 entries, of which not one was found worthy of adoption : so that the Committee was compelled to produce

¹ An account of the building of the Crystal Palace and its subsequent history is given by the same author in his book *1851 and the Great Exhibition* which has just been published. It is fully illustrated from contemporary engravings.

a design of its own. This proved to be a gigantic erection of brick, eighteen acres large, crowned by a vast dome of sheet iron. But though its authors, of whom Brunel was the principal, were men of great distinction and experience, this scheme had several grave defects: it could never be built in the time, it was perfectly hideous, it was ruinously expensive, and it would be almost impossible to demolish. The public in general, and the Protectionists in particular, to whom the whole idea of the Exhibition was abhorrent, seized upon the faults of the building as an excuse to agitate against the project; Prince Albert himself despaired of carrying it through; when, at an interview between a Mr. Joseph Paxton and a Mr. Henry Cole, the solution of the difficulty was put forward and unofficially accepted.

Cole and Paxton were two types of all that was best in the nineteenth century. Cole was a civil servant, artist, writer and critic, and the true originator of this as of many other exhibitions. Paxton was a gardener who had risen in the service of the Duke of Devonshire to the positions of an agent, architect, engineer, railway director, financier and newspaper proprietor. Among his innumerable successes were two important ferrovitreous buildings—the Great Conservatory at Chatsworth, an acre in extent and of great height, and the Lily House, built to accommodate his horticultural masterpiece, the Victoria Regia lily. It was just after the completion of the latter that he turned his mind to the controversy over the Hyde Park building.

There had been many earlier glass buildings. Glass was an expensive material, subject till 1845 to a heavy excise, and manufactured in smallish sizes, for the most part by foreign workmen. Paxton himself had forced the manufacturers to make it larger for his Conservatory. It had been used to some extent in the new railway stations. The

firm of Turner's, of Dublin, had built many conservatories, of which the chief was Decimus Burton's Palm House at Kew : they had even submitted a design in glass for the Building Committee's competition. But Paxton's scheme was unique in more respects than one. Adopting an eight-foot unit grouped in threes, he built it up into an illimitable series of galleries, tiers, courts and avenues, all repeating the same filling of glass and the same tenuous structure of slight columns and girders. Each bay was the same as its neighbour, each storey repeated the one below. There was no display of strength, no seeming of stress, and not an inch of wasted space. But the most revolutionary feature of all was that by the simplification of units and the pre-fabrication of great quantities, and by their adaptable nature, the contractors were able to undertake to finish the whole (optimistically as it turned out) in five months, and at a net cost, assuming that they took the materials, of only £79,800.

Paxton's design was originally sketched on a blotter in a board-room at Derby : it was finished in a week in the offices at Chatsworth : it was foisted upon the authorities in a fortnight : and three weeks later it was being staked out. Grave fears were entertained in some quarters for the safety of so flimsy a building, and various cranks and disappointed rivals drew attention to the peril of fires, gales, hailstorms, and above all the peril of a great influx of visitors. But the building was to falsify every prophecy. Though it looked so slight, it was to stand like a rock against every storm, and to accommodate crowds of as many as 100,000 persons in safety. On the other hand, though it looked almost fireproof, it was actually a mass of combustible material, and constituted by its very shape a natural flue for any wind which blew, as that of November the 30th chanced

to do, from the right quarter. Paxton well knew this danger, and took elaborate precautions against it.

The success of the finished building was complete. London gloried in its 'Crystal Palace': six millions passed through its doors. From old copies of the *Illustrated London News* we can recapture a glimpse of its fresh beauty, set down by careful engravers, seen by moonlight across the Serpentine. Myriads of flags waved from its roof: inside it was glowing with warmth and variety: outside its new and brightly coloured paint and its glass all washed by showers glittered and shone all that glorious summer. Most of the visitors declared that none of the wonders in the exhibition could approach the wonder of the edifice itself. The British public, when they heard the story of Sir Joseph Paxton (as he now became), acclaimed him as a hero, a representative embodiment of all that the age admired.

It was primarily due to Prince Albert that the Crystal Palace was banished from Hyde Park. Paxton formed a company to acquire it, and purchased the magnificent site at Sydenham, visualising a great centre where education and decorous amusement would walk hand in hand. Happiness and enlightenment would be shed upon the masses: while scope would be given at the same time to his (Paxton's) own genius for landscape gardening and display. Unfortunately, his ideas were now so princely as to border upon megalomania. The palace itself was approximately doubled in size in the course of re-erection: the grounds were laid out with a total disregard to expense. One of Paxton's weaknesses was for fountains: to support the prodigious system of fountains that was to play on the top terraces of this elevated site, he employed Brunel to build the two water-towers, containing over 350,000 gallons of water.

During the years following its reopening by Queen Vic-

toria in 1854, the Crystal Palace did succeed in filling the part for which it was intended. The Company was given a Charter, which enjoined it to maintain a high moral and educational tone. Experts in architecture and archæology were given a free hand with the interior. A huge collection of reproductions of statuary was brought together. Rare animals and plants thrived in the warmth and radiance of the atmosphere. In 1859, the first of the triennial Handel festivals took place : and at other concerts an orchestra of 2,000 and a choir of 4,000 were brought under one conductor. Temperance and religious bodies held their festivals here : Spurgeon preached to nearly 24,000 listeners. Blondin walked the tight-rope between the towers and across the transept : Brock's fireworks annually surpassed themselves. There were royal visits by Napoleon and Eugénie, the Tsar, the Sultan, the Khedive, the Shah, and the Kaiser. Until quite late in the century, the Palace ranked with Westminster Abbey and the other regular sights of London.

But the Company never paid its way. Paxton had saddled it with an insupportable burden both of capital outlay and of maintenance expenses. In 1866, the north wing and transept were destroyed by fire : and since neither the public nor the shareholders would put up sufficient money to replace it, the building was permanently truncated ever since. In 1880, one of the water-tanks burst. The grounds began to run to seed. The fountains ceased to play, the cement crumbled, the plaster peeled. A generation arose, in the footsteps of Mr. Pooter, to whom fast trains and the non-observance of Sundays made Brighton or Southend as accessible as Sydenham had been. The directors lost heart. A receiver was appointed : the Court ordered the property to be sold for a sixth of what it had cost. It was bought by the Earl of Plymouth : and after

two years of appeals in *The Times*, a Lord Mayor's Fund took it off his hands and made it over to the nation. This was in 1913. During the War, it was a training ship. In 1920, it reopened as the Imperial War Museum. Since then, a succession of shows of dogs, cats, babies and poultry, of revivalist meetings and brass band competitions, maintained it in a state of miraculous solvency. The able management of Sir Henry Buckland attracted something like a million visitors a year to these special occasions : and the trustees were even enabled to undertake certain works of restoration. But few people went to see the building for its own sake. Between whiles, it was empty and untidy. The contents were of a marvellous incongruity. Each successive exhibition seemed to have left a little of its more useless jetsam behind. There were many relics of 1851, and the hand of Paxton showed itself in innumerable places. But the air was one of utter desolation, of immense space unnoticed and untended, of cafés that did not cater and taps that did not turn.

The beauty of the building derived mostly from its size : the detail was a plain and inoffensive Victorian pattern, but its endless repetition, tier upon tier, bay after bay, produced an extraordinary lightness and grace. Dating from the very heyday of frills, it was quite free of frills itself. The central transept was composed of the same units as the wings : the lowest storey was no more emphatic than the topmost. All its effect, all its emphasis, depended on the vast spaces of light and shadow which the walls themselves enclosed without the least attempt at self-assertion.

Perhaps it would not be too much to call it a work of genius. Paxton was not an artist : all he did was to devise his engineering unit and to cover his given space with it. But in doing so he taught a lesson which was ignored for

fifty years and more. He left his building to speak for itself, in an age when buildings ranted and roared. A later generation found his work refreshing, and proclaimed it as a historic episode in architecture. A few pilgrims embarked on interminable bus-rides to the new-found shrine. But the colossal marble bust of Paxton looked down on them with mild amusement. Let them admire his handiwork, he must have thought : but at least let them learn his lesson accurately. The Crystal Palace was at least symmetrical. Paxton did not avail himself of the ferrovitreous technique to poise great masses upon vacant space, to leave the corners of his building without visible support, or to trifle about with awkward and arbitrary dispositions of voids. His building was sane and straightforward by comparison with those of his contemporaries : by comparison with those of his present-day admirers, it was still more sane and still more straightforward.

COMING TO TEA.

BY L. A. G. STRONG.

HE met her on the doorstep. The girl's face changed to surprise at the sight of him.

'I saw you from the window,' he said. 'Did she—did she ask you to tea?'

'Yes. Have I come on the wrong day, or something?'

'No. No. No. I didn't know you were coming. I could have sent you a message—wired, or telephoned. But I didn't know.'

Then, seeing the perplexity in her face, he cried, 'My dear—she's dead.'

'Dead!' The girl recoiled a step. 'But . . . I didn't even know she was ill.'

'She wasn't. At least . . . It was very sudden. They rang me up at the Museum, but I wasn't there. It was some time before they got me. I came at once, of course. She was still alive, but unconscious. She passed away peacefully. Her breathing just got fainter and fainter ~~and—~~' He finished with a little forlorn gesture.

'I'm most terribly sorry.' Sincerity rang in the girl's voice. The colour flooded back to her face. 'I—'

'No. Don't go.' He put out a hand as if to clutch at her. 'Stay and have tea with me. Please. I'm all alone. Esther's away on a cruise. She doesn't know, of course. She won't know. In fact,' he stared at her with a half-shocked expression, 'she won't even be here for the funeral.'

The girl stood, unhappy, undecided. He came down a step and stood beside her.

‘Please come in. I haven’t seen anyone, except the doctor and the landlady. Mr. Finch—he’s her solicitor, you know—he can’t come. Not till to-morrow. But he’s making all the—the arrangements.’ He looked earnestly into her face. ‘Do come in. They are just going to bring in tea.’

Turning from her, without waiting for an answer, he hurried up the steps, clicking his fingers. With an embarrassed little grimace, she followed him.

He plunged in at the open door of the sitting-room, recollected himself, came out again, and stood to usher her in.

‘In here,’ he muttered.

Her manner was stiff and awkward. She knew him quite well, of course. He had been there several times, with his mother, and once they had dined and gone to a cinema together : but she had never been with him alone. And, for the moment, she did not want to be with anybody. She wanted to go away quietly somewhere, by herself, and try to digest the news.

‘Won’t you sit down?’

‘Thank you.’

To compose herself, she looked around the familiar room. Every object reflected the quiet personality of the little old lady who had owned it. The high-backed rocking-chair by the fireplace, with the grey Shetland shawl folded neatly across its back ; the old Irish praying-chair, with its sconces, drawn up to the oddly carved writing-table in the window ; the silver-covered blotter, the ivory-handled pen with the J nib, the squat solid cut-glass inkpot, which rested upon it ; everything was as it had been on countless visits she had paid before.

Mr. George stood, clicking his fingers. She looked at him. He started, as if in self-reproach.

‘To be sure,’ he said. ‘I’m forgetting.’

He went over and rang the bell. An awkward silence followed, broken at last by the maid’s footsteps on the tiled hallway.

‘One more cup, please, Elsie. And some more bread and butter.’

The maid looked reproachfully at him, and even more reproachfully at the girl; compressed her lips; and withdrew. There was another silence.

The girl sat, her hot fingers nervously entwined.

‘I can hardly believe it,’ she said. ‘I shall miss her most frightfully. No——’ She made an impulsive movement towards him. ‘That was a terribly selfish thing to say, when you——’

‘No, no, no. Go on. I like to hear you.’

The words would not come. She swallowed, and sketched a helpless gesture. He was looking at her, nodding, with an odd enthusiasm.

‘Isn’t it a grand thing,’ he blurted out, ‘when an old lady and a young girl are such friends? She thought the whole world of you. Oh, yes, she did. Many’s the time she’s said to me, “I’ve got Joan coming to tea. We’re such friends. She makes me feel young again.”’

‘Don’t!’ The girl clasped her hands tightly together.

He continued, unheeding, ‘“She confides in me so. She tells me all her troubles, and all the troubles of the family at home.”’

‘I did, indeed.’ She looked up at him earnestly. ‘And it wasn’t like confiding in an old person at all. She was so young in mind. She’d been through such a lot, and yet she could always remember what it felt like to be young.’

‘She had been through a lot, as you say. Indeed she had.’ He sighed, and fingered his chin. His finger made

a rasping noise, and she saw that he was badly shaven, in patches.

‘A terrible lot, she had been through,’ he repeated, but, even as he was speaking, the breath went out of his voice, and his look became vague again. He sighed, and began wandering about the room.

Then the high heels once more clicked in the hall, and Elsie, still reproachful, brought in the extra tea-things. He waited, till she went: sighed again: fumbled abstractedly with teapot and cups for a moment, and put them down. The girl waited, then, after a glance at his face, quietly possessed herself of the teapot, and poured out for them both.

He gave a start of surprise. ‘Thank you. Oh, thank you. No, thanks. I don’t want anything to eat.’

‘You must,’ she said quietly. ‘You’ll have such a lot to see to. You must take care of yourself.’

He picked up a piece of bread and butter, folded it over, raised it half-way to his lips, and set it down. ‘You’re right,’ he said. ‘She did go through a lot.’ Then, as if he had made up his mind, he turned to her abruptly. ‘You know her story, don’t you?’

‘I think so,’ she murmured. ‘Some of it, at least.’

‘She’s told you about her home, I expect. For that matter, there are the photographs of it.’ He swung a hand vaguely towards the wall. ‘Well, her maiden name was Donovan, and her father was a general—that’s him, on the right of the mantelpiece; and they lived in a lovely old house called Bohanestown, some miles from Dublin. They entertained a great deal, and moved in the best society. Then, when she was over on a visit in London, she met my father. He was a man of good family, but, through no fault of his own, he was in a very subordinate position.

His father had died when he was only a boy, leaving him with a mother and a sister to support : and he had to take the first work he could get.

‘ Well—when my mother announced that she was going to marry him, there was the most terrible scene. You can’t imagine the snobbery of a good Irish Protestant family of that time. Simply can’t imagine it. The general raved and swore, and ordered her to give father up. Mother—can you imagine her giving anyone up ?—did her best to make the old man see reason, for she loved him too, and he adored her. But he would not. So they made a runaway match of it. The old man was beside himself with fury. He never forgave them.

‘ So mother had to come over here, and live in a poky little house in the suburbs, and be poor, and cook, and scrub, and mend, and do her own washing and ironing—she who had always had maids and the best of everything. And, worst of all, she had to put up with being looked down upon by people she would never even have heard of at home. But she never complained. She won through. And—you know all she did for us.’

The girl nodded. He picked up his teacup, and put it down very carefully on the edge of the table. The girl watched it in an agony, afraid he would knock it off.

‘ She had to watch every penny. Funny folk. Even after father died, they never really forgave her. Eh ? ’

‘ Your cup——’

‘ My cup ? Oh yes. Thank you.’ He moved it.

‘ She was marvellous to me,’ the girl began in a low tone ; but he stood up, interrupting her.

‘ Will you come in and see her ? ’

She fought with a momentary fear, then, ashamed, since he so plainly wanted her to come, she nodded.

They went together into the square high bedroom, hushed and close with the indefinable stuffiness of death. He crossed to a window and pulled up a blind. A beam of light pierced the yellow gloom, and fell straight upon the face of the little old lady on the bed.

The girl caught her breath. The face and body had a stillness that was not the aggressive stillness of so many corpses, but was all peace. Thirty years had been smoothed from the face. It was serene, smooth as water at dawn, and there was at the corners of the mouth the lightest hint of a smile, just as though she had fallen asleep dreaming of Bohanestown, as it was in the days of her youth, hearing voices and laughter from the croquet lawn, and the bark of her old spaniel Skip as he frolicked and gambolled round her feet, delighted to escape into the green garden after the rain. Yet, if she had fallen asleep dreaming of such things, she was not dreaming of them now. The peace of the face was beyond that. Happiness and unhappiness were nothing to it any more. Remote, ineffable, its peace reproved the pity which the girl had brought. It was she, with her sorrows and joys before her, who was to be pitied: she, and the bereaved man at her side.

She turned, and saw him, forlorn, bewildered, his hair greying at the temples, standing there fingering his chin, a lost middle-aged man, deprived of his guide and comforter. His mother had been everything to him. He would not know what to do now that she was gone.

Seeing him so forlorn, all the emotion dammed up in the girl broke loose. Suddenly, she put an arm round him, pulled him to her, and kissed him. Then, without a word, she rushed out of the room, across the hall, and down the steps, the glare and green of the street a dazzle before her swimming eyes.

FOREST EVENING.

To-day in the heart of the forest
I have heard the wild bird's song,
And the noise of the crickets crying
In the bracken all day long :

To-day in the heart of the forest
I have seen the young hawk's flight,
The curve of his long swift swooping,
The flash of his wings in the light :

I have seen the butterflies chasing
On the drift of the careless breeze,
The bright-eyed squirrels leaping,
The lazy run of the bees :

I have seen the high sun streaming
In green and gold on the leaves,
The diamond's glint and sparkle
On the web that midnight weaves :

I have known all things that are joyful,
That are wild and fresh and free,
All things most young, most lovely,
Most glorious to see.

I have walked all day in the forest,
I am dusty and tired and sore—
And the voices I heard in the sunlight,
I hear them now no more :

*And the things that I saw in the forest,
The lights and the shades and the dews,
The birds, the beasts and the flowers, .
The dragonfly's myriad hues,*

*They are gone from the glades, they are sleeping
Where even the wind is still,
Where the mist of the sweet pale evening
Creeps with a gathering chill.*

*And now from the margin of shadows
The young moon wanders high,
And the scents that blow in the forest
Rise to the primrose sky :*

*And the dim white road goes winding
Past meadow and farm and pond,
Right through the heart of the forest
Over the heath beyond :*

*And the only sounds of the forest
Are the owl's and the nightjar's song—
But the crickets will still be crying
In the bracken all night long.*

Julian Tennyson.

BY THE WAY.

WHO has not, at some time or other in their lives, played the game, fascinating but tantalising, of thinking themselves someone—or something—other than the human beings they are ? Usually, after dwelling pleasantly for a while upon the power or luxury or freedom we should enjoy in a changed existence, we come back at last to a resigned, if not a complacent, contemplation of our own individualities, which we would not in actual fact exchange with those of any other persons. And yet, when weighed with certain thoughts, what a relief it would be to escape altogether from the burdens, the follies, and the crimes of humanity ! Consider, for example, the possibilities that are in a robin. I feel perfectly certain that robins are never ashamed : we have only to look at one to be convinced of that—but we humans are, or ought to be, often. Recently I chanced to listen to a talk on the wireless during the children's hour : the speaker was telling his unseen listeners of the Koala, that harmless, amusing little tree-bear of Australia ; he described the Koala in its hundreds of thousands, unmolested by the aborigines—until the coming of civilised man : that miscalled creature discovered that he could get 6*d.* a skin for Koalas, and now they are rarities, even in Queensland. A few days later I sat at a public function by a man who has a deservedly distinguished name for his work in connection with the welfare of the inhabitants of this London of ours, the home, as we who belong to it like to think, of all that is best in the world : he asked me whether I had studied the latest methods of making an ordinary room secure from an enemy gas

attack ; had I thought, for instance, of pasting paper over the keyhole ? A mad world, my masters, a world of which humanity has much, very much, to be deeply ashamed. There is, in sober truth, a good deal to be said for preferring to-day to be a robin.

* * *

In various ages there have been various ways in which men and women of much wealth and restless ambition have sought to exercise influence over their fellows. It has been given to those of this century to pursue that aim by the purchase of newspapers, and singular have been some of the adventures. The most recent, and perhaps the most singular, was the transmogrification of the *Saturday Review* : it had had a past of merit and respectability ; suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, or rather between one weekend and another, it blossomed forth—if that be the appropriate expression—into an hysterical vehemence that has had few parallels in modern English journalism. It was amusing, no doubt, whilst it lasted, and very possibly good as a remedy against quietude—and yet I am inclined to think most people are not altogether sorry to have it again voicing opinion soberly and with restraint. There is a tale I remember once being told of a certain famous journal which on one occasion had a leading article expressing views very divergent from the expected : the next day its leading article returned to its normal line, opening with the words ‘ the night has brought reflection.’ ‘ What the night had really brought,’ ended the narrator dryly, ‘ was the proprietor down in a fury.’ It is strange occasionally to reflect upon the moulding of public opinion and the chances that beset it : the one real consolation is that in this country people for the most part obstinately refuse to think as they are bidden, and indeed often prefer

to read, in place of an echo of their own opinions, that with which they emphatically disagree.

* * *

My small son, aged $5\frac{1}{2}$, and I were talking—at least he was ; he was telling me all about his political plans. He had begun by asking me what would happen if he slapped a policeman and was lamentably unimpressed by my answer—he would soon break out of prison, he would get together an army and ‘bang people against the railings’ ; Peter (his crony, aged $4\frac{3}{4}$) would help—though Peter was not very brave. The conversation proceeded :

Boy : ‘ I shall have lots of soldiers and policemen, and we’ll fight everybody.’

Father : ‘ They won’t fight just because you tell them to.’

Boy : ‘ But I shall be the king : they’ll have to.’

Father (sententiously) : ‘ In the olden days the king could just tell them : he can’t quite do that now.’

Boy : ‘ Oh, but he will be able to again when I’m king !’

Thus early do our children pass from Bolshevism to dictatorship !

* * *

Recent weeks have been rich in autobiographies, a curious form of literature. Three autobiographies of writers lie before me, each as different, one from the other, as their authors. There is, first of all, Kipling’s, entitled with truth and simplicity *Something of myself : for my friends known and unknown* (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. n.). There have been few literary phenomena like Rudyard Kipling, world-famous whilst still in his twenties : the only comparable figure in this respect that I can think of is Charles Dickens. In everything Kipling wrote, in his less good moments as in his great, there is something curiously compelling, often beyond analysis or other explanation than lies in the vivid, tremendous

personality behind the words—and so it is in this book. It is incomplete, even as Kipling's life somehow was ; it ends much too soon, even as his greatest creative period did—but it holds the reader irresistibly from the first page to the last. It leaves much unsaid ; but the biographer of a vast influence, when he arises, will have to take it all most fully into account.

Then, next, comes J. B. Priestley's, rather fancifully entitled *Midnight on the Desert : a chapter of autobiography* (Heinemann, 8s. 6d. n.). My real complaint about this is that I took it up thinking that it would be all, or at any rate mostly, about J. B. Priestley, and it is very different from the expected. It is Mr. Priestley, sitting in his hut in Arizona, beside his stove, pipe in mouth, chatting. He chats to his reader just as he would to a friend, not about himself—or only indirectly and partially—but about his recent experiences in, and impressions of, certain parts and places of the United States, New York, California, Arizona and the rest. Mr. Priestley is so immensely interested in everything around him—in this at least having a kinship with Arnold Bennett—that he conveys this interest, even in matters that are quite unimportant in themselves, to his reader. And he is unfailingly modest and good-humoured. But he can write a vastly greater book than this ; he can probe much deeper into the heart of the modern world : here he remains, definitely and deliberately, upon the surface—and that, to my mind, for a man of his gifts is a pity.

The third is Frank Swinnerton's, and this is entitled with an almost superb brevity *Swinnerton : An Autobiography* (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d. n.) ; but then that is just what it is not. On page 365 he says, ' it was never my intention to pass in review, as if they were a household regiment, all the authors of the present era,' but that is what his book in fact does.

All the authors he has met—and though there are some very conspicuous absentees (his two fellow autobiographers, Kipling and Priestley, for instance, and there are many others) he has met a very great many—are passed in these pages in review, hardly, however, so much in the rôle of authors as in that of jolly fellows. Unlike many who record their impressions of their comrades or acquaintances, Mr. Swinerton has a good word for everybody and in consequence his roving reminiscences are pleasant reading: he even forbears to complain of me for anticipating by a few weeks a title for a book he had selected for one of his own—and if that is not forbearance I do not know what is. But I could not help wishing he had told his readers a little less about the appearance, the personal idiosyncrasies, and the popularity of his very large company of friends and more about their minds and the works for which they are noted. But still one cannot have everything—even in an autobiography.

* * *

Two other autobiographies call for attention, if only to establish the vast variety of human lives, each utterly different not only from one another but from each of the three literary autobiographies above mentioned. One is J. H. Thomas's *My Story* (Hutchinson, 15s. n.), which, being the life-story told by himself of a very remarkable man, is inevitably interesting, though hardly literary. It is, in fact, almost painfully disjointed, and those who look for the much-heralded 'secrets' will perhaps be almost as disappointed as those who hope for a fund of good stories. These are few: by far the best are two in quick succession of Mr. Lloyd George. But throughout there is little humour: instead we have an all-pervading atmosphere of vehement and aggrieved self-defence which is possibly natural and yet is inimical to a reader's enjoyment. Mr. Thomas has been

a much greater figure in our national life than will be readily gathered from these troubled pages.

The second is in every respect a contrast—a rollicking experience of life in the Army in India and at home as a *Colonel's Lady* (Bell, 7s. 6d. n.), told by Leonora Starr, whose work is not unknown to readers of CORNHILL. Here is no gallery of distinguished folk, merely a simple, humorous, and courageous chronicle, all narrated in the spirit of its admirable opening: 'Having at the age of twenty-three acquired a satisfactory husband and two lusty sons, and the younger of these being a year old, it seemed to me that the time was ripe for further adventure. Whether to write a book or have a daughter I had not quite made up my mind ——' Readers will be grateful that owing to the intervention of the War Office the decision was in favour of the former.

* * *

And biographies, three of them, each again as completely different as the lives of which they treat. I opened *Grey of Fallodon* (Longmans, 16s. n.) by Professor G. M. Trevelyan with very high expectation; the life of a very great Englishman written by one whom I have long thought our greatest living historian ought to be something peculiarly notable. Perhaps I expected too much: to convey successfully in a single volume not only so dual a personality but also, and of necessity, an account of the world events with which he wrestled is more, doubtless, than could reasonably be asked even of Professor Trevelyan. At all events, I laid the volume down at length, slightly disappointed. It has an oddly in and out chronology; it has some repetitions which bear upon them all the marks of hasty compilation; but it is of course deeply interesting, and nowhere more so than in its beautifully restrained references to Mr. Lloyd George's memory. The summing up is perhaps true of both of the

biography and the biographer. 'Where he failed no one could have succeeded; where he succeeded many would have failed.'

Little, however, really needs to be added about Paul Kruger: in *The Pace of the Ox* (Constable, 10s. 6d. n.) Marjorie Juta has given fully and with remarkable vigour the life story of the indomitable figure that so many of us who can recall the hectic months of the South African war thought of as 'slim.' That he never was: in youth a tremendously vigorous, splendid specimen of manhood, in age a stubborn, and even grim, figure, Life did not deal gently with 'Oom Paul'; and it is only of recent times when the bitterness is past that his full stature as a patriot, even if of limited vision, can be recognised. This biography lacks in dispassionate criticism, but it atones in graphic power.

Thirdly, Milton Waldman, who has already shown his gifts as a historian—most recently in his admirable *Elizabeth*—deals vividly with as vivid and capricious a set of people as has ever strutted on the stage of a nation's affairs, Catherine de Medici and her seven children, in his new book *Biography of a Family* (Longmans, 16s. n.). It is, of course, undeniable that the subjects and the period lend themselves to a capable biographer almost as though they had existed for no other purpose: even a dull one could hardly make them uninteresting, but Mr. Waldman is more than capable and never dull. This is a book which it does not need a historian to enjoy; it is an immensely vivacious record of a family who really, difficult as it is in this age to believe, 'once actually lived' and conducted their lives as herein depicted. Grey of Fallodon had world cataclysm with which to cope, but he was at least spared the combination of Valois, Bourbon, Guise, Montmorency, Châtillon, and Lorraine.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 162.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page 14, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 30th April.

'Now that ——'s ——.'

1. 'That all thy motions gently pass
—— a plane of molten glass,'
2. 'No star of all heaven sends to light our —— to the
tomb.'
3. 'By sweet enforcement and —— dear,'
4. 'Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
Nor harken what the —— spirit sings,'
5. '—— a cloud of fire ;
The blue deep thou wingest.'

Answer to Acrostic 160, February number : 'Nor *lowly* hedge nor solitary thorn : ' (Thomas Hood : 'Autumn'). 1. *Lh*out*H* ('loweth,' Cuckoo Song, Old English). 2. *OnE* (Wordsworth : 'The Trosachs'). 3. *WoulD* (Thomas Otway : 'The Enchantment'). 4. *LonG* (Coleridge : 'Kubla Khan'). 5. *YE* (Wordsworth : 'Ode on Intimation of Immortality').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. Claydon, The School House, Sittingbourne, and Major L. C. Sargent, Manor Cottage, Westbury, Northants, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MAY 1937.

THE CROWNING OF THE QUEEN.

Thursday, June 28, 1838.

BY FANNY BEATY-POWNALL.

The pages from which the following historical account has been copied are yellow with age, and their delicate, flowing handwriting is dim and faint under the effacing finger of Time. She who wrote them in 1838—my mother—whose own personal recollection they enshrine, was then a young woman of 28. She passed away in 1891, at the advanced age of 81, and I have often heard her speak of the notable scene which her graphic pen here describes.

The Jubilee of our beloved Queen was welcomed by her with intense interest and thanksgiving, and one of her latest memoranda, dated June 5, 1887, records in failing handwriting, that 'After a season of storm and cold, rain, frost and snow, Trinity Sunday broke upon us with a bright and joyous summer's morn, heralding in, we trust, still brighter hours for the coming Jubilee of our beloved Queen, whom we pray God to bless, and save from all danger.'

Of her personal papers, few are more precious to me than these, in which her dear 'vanished hand' has traced the impression made upon her loyal heart and mind by the grand Coronation pageant, of which she was a privileged spectator. I can render no finer honour to her memory, than to associate it with the 'crowning history' of that great Ruler whom she regarded with deeply reverential affection, our noblest Queen amongst women, and tenderest woman among Queens—

Victoria the Venerated and Venerable.

Cora Marshall.

AN ACCOUNT OF MY PROCEEDINGS ON
THE CORONATION DAY OF HER MOST
GRACIOUS MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA.

Thursday, June 28, 1838.

HAVING joined the Feredays in London on the 20th inst. (from Milton Vicarage), I remained with them at their lodgings, 306 Regent Street, until after the Coronation took place. Through Mr. Bickley's interest, we obtained tickets from his friend, Mr. Lemon, 29 Chester Terrace, Regent's Park, for admittance at the Athenæum Club to see the procession to the Abbey, and, as he was appointed a Gold Stick to the Earl Marshal—Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke (Dudley Fereday's friend)—promised to look after us there ; but lo ! and behold, on Wednesday Sir Arthur called and told us that we must be introduced into the Club by the member whose tickets were to admit us ; that the Athenæum did not open until *seven* o'clock, and Mr. Lemon had orders to be in the Abbey at five. Here was a predicament ! Mr. Bickley rushed off to Mr. Lemon, and found Sir Arthur's statement too true, and what was to be done, he knew not. Anne went with Mr. L. to the Herald's office, where the order was peremptory that ' he be in the Abbey at Lord Surrey's box at five o'clock.' She left him (for dinner time approached), having received his assurance that no exertion should be spared on his part to obtain us seats somewhere, and that he was almost certain that through his interest with Lord Surrey he could get us tickets for the interior of the Abbey, and that we must be prepared to go there at half-past four the following morning, in full dress. What a bother ! and like two donkeys, we fancied we had much rather have gone to the Athenæum, but then, two seats in the Abbey—for *nothing* ! that was *something*,

when many would have given 20 pounds for the same. So we sat down to dinner, prepared to meet our Fate ; —‘ to be,’ or ‘ not to be,’ as Mr. Lemon proved successful, or otherwise.

As we were discussing our mutton, Mr. Lemon’s well-known grey horse stood at the door, his rider having dismounted, and ran in breathless, to enquire if we would be ready to accompany him to the Abbey next morning, for which he had (to his own surprise) got two tickets from Lord Surrey—or be contented with two places in Parliament Street, to see the procession.—‘ Which shall we do, Fanny ? ’ said Anne. ‘ I should by all means say the Abbey,’ quoth Susan. ‘ Oh yes, very well.’ said I. ‘ Very well,’ replied our kind friend : ‘ that settles it, so be ready for me at half-past four exactly.’ and away he went ; leaving us to make our arrangements for the *auspicious* day. The Pownalls dined with us, and after dinner, Charles and Kate, Anne, Edwin and myself posted off to Forster’s in Wigmore Street to buy *roses* or anything else, for our hair. We came home, and Charles went with me to Railton’s, for long kid gloves. Then came the question, what was *I* to go in (having only two *second-* or *third-rate* costumes with me). Kate proffered to lend me her amber poplin, and Charles promised to send it for me to try on. About ten the Pownalls left us and ‘ Pandy ’ and I retired to our own room to *fit on*, and consider what we should wear. In the midst of our consultation, arrived Charles with Kate’s gown, and two splendid bouquets from *Convent Garden*. Anne nearly in fits, lest I should admit the gentleman into our room, as she was partially undressed. The gown fitted ‘ *à merveille* ’ and I found that a satin dress of Anne’s did the same, and as my figure was so accommodating, I had two dresses to choose from.

About eleven we laid down to rest. I got to sleep in about an hour, but was awoke about two o'clock by Anne in great perturbation, at the treatment she had received from some never-to-be-mentioned *nocturnal* visitors, who after a cessation of their civilities for two nights had chosen this time to pay their respects to her. Though sincerely pitying her, I could not help laughing at her exclamations of disgust, and on seeing her depart, wrapped up in her cloak, for the sitting-room sofa, I could not compose my risible muscles for some time. I only got another short doze, when three o'clock having struck, Anne marched in again and begged me to arise. Then came the horrors of dressing, half by daylight, half by candlelight, looking like ghosts, and endeavouring to place roses and wreaths so as to be becoming. 'Pandy' had a very pretty embroidered muslin lined and trimmed with *lemon* colour; short sleeves, long kid gloves, and her beautiful 'Victoria wreath' of roses and chrysanthemums in her hair, yellow topaz earrings and brooch. I selected the satin dress, with Kate's blonde cape, stuck a rose on each side of my head, and my bouquet in my bosom, and ran into the room where Teddy made me *try* to eat some breakfast. I swallowed a cup of coffee, and we each filled a bag with sweet biscuits to satisfy the cravings of 'nater,' when as Anne was placing her bouquet, up drove Mr. Lemon's carriage, and he in his Coronation dress—a frock of dark blue cloth, richly braided with gold, a white silk sash with gold fringe, white silk *untalkaboutables*! stockings to match, black shoes and gold buckles, a cocked hat and black, and staff of office.

We quickly shawled, and drove off, on a misty, grey-looking morning, and when we reached Charing Cross we found a continued line of carriages all the way to the Abbey. The balconies not yet occupied, but many people astir, and

flags flying in all directions. Our coachman skilfully whipped in between the carriages in Great George Street, and twenty minutes before five we were set down at the covered way to the north entrance; our tickets being for the north transept gallery. A crowd soon collected as far as the first barrier in the entrance, a gay group of ladies in every variety of full dress, all in anxious expectation of the clock striking five, when the doors were to be opened. I turned round, to look at those behind me, and was greeted by Miss Luard, who with her party, remained close to us until we had passed the barrier. A few minutes after five, the way was opened, and a pretty considerable squeeze there was, ladies exclaiming 'Oh dear! bless me!' etc. and their attendant gentlemen begging those behind not to *push so*, which they politely assured them they could not avoid. I met with a kind soul, who guarded me through the mass, and to whom I was obliged for keeping my shawl on my shoulders. But *the* squeeze commenced, on the door into the Abbey being opened, and as only one person could enter at once, the eager endeavours to be first were 'obstreperous.' Anne was first; Mr. Lemon and I followed, and not seeing her, I called out 'Anne Fereday!' as loudly as I could. When she made her way to us, Mr. Lemon hastily shook our hands, bidding 'God bless us' and that he would come to us when he could.

As fast as our legs would carry us, we ran up the winding stone stairs and rushed down breathless into the front seat of the gallery—quite exhausted with our previous exertions, and too much tired to speak. We were agreeably surprised to find ourselves in a very good situation. The Peeresses' seats just below us, in the centre of the transept, a full view of the Chair of State, the Throne, the Royal and Ambassadors' boxes. The seats all round us were quickly occu-

pied ; and the dresses of the ladies were very elegant ; diamonds and jewels ‘ rich and rare,’ with gold embroidery glittering in all directions : uniforms of all sorts, and gentlemen in Court dresses being mingled amongst the fairer part of Creation. I soon composed myself to take a doze, supported by a stone pillar behind me, and many ladies seemed inclined to follow my example. So passed the hours, with many a peep down at the Peeresses, as they took their seats ; everyone as she entered, exciting a buzz of admiration from the splendour of her dress. Such tiaras—necklaces and stomachers of diamonds—each one that came, seeming more dazzling than the last, and all had white satin, blonde, or gold lamé dresses—embroidered and fringed with gold, beneath their crimson velvet robes. Many came as early as six o’clock and Lord Brownlow was one of the first Peers who arrived.

At nine o’clock we heard the Park guns announce the Queen’s departure from the Palace, but not until eleven, did the first carriage of the Royal Procession reach the Abbey. Before that, some of the foreign ambassadors entered their box, in splendid dresses, one in a beautiful violet-coloured velvet vest, with a short mantle of silver tissue, trimmed with dark sable, and a splendid dagger in the girdle : he was either German or Austrian. We had a full view of all the Foreign Ministers as they entered, and were marshalled into their box—they, and their ladies and suites entering conversation with the Peeresses as they passed them. A general movement and murmur announced which was Marshal Soult, a rather little man, seemingly infirm, and grey-headed. Then came such a handsome man, who, I fancy, was the Turkish ambassador, though some said it was Prince Strogonoff, the Russian. He was rather a stout-built figure, a clear dark complexion, with

colour ;—a noble forehead, and large dark eyes, eyebrows, hair and moustachios, with a most pleasing good-humoured, animated countenance ; his dress was of crimson velvet, richly embroidered in gold ; a mantle of the same, with a deep falling collar of swansdown ; and a gold hilted dagger : altogether he was the most seduisant person in appearance I saw : he had a round crowned cap of crimson velvet, with ornaments of gold. But the ‘observed of all observers’ was Prince Esterhazy—in his ‘diamond dress’ ; for nearly the whole of his dark green hussar uniform was covered with brilliants, and the tops of his Hessian boots the same ; in his hand was his hussar cap, in which was a splendid spray, in the form of three feathers, composed entirely of diamonds. He chatted with great gaiety to the Peeresses, kissing their hands with much gallantry, and seeming delighted at the admiration they expressed at his splendid appearance. The Greek Minister was most elegant in appearance ; in the full costume which is so graceful and becoming. The Hungarian in the same style and their ladies elegantly attired. After them, came the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Princess Augusta and ladies in waiting, and Prince George, who is a most amiable pleasing-looking young man, and a most ‘topping’ slight figure. The Duchess of Kent, looking very *queenly*, and handsome. She and the Duke of Sussex were warmly greeted on their entrance.

But nothing could exceed the excitement when the guns announced the Queen’s arrival—and as she walked from the western door, the organ and choir struck up, everyone standing up to greet her on her first appearance. What a glittering and gorgeous sight ! Her Majesty walked with a slow and stately step, raising her eyes, and looking at every point of the gay assemblage. She looked

flushed and excited: and wore a splendid tiara, necklace and earrings of diamonds, a blonde dress over white satin, embroidered and fringed with gold: her long crimson train borne by eight Maids of Honour, most simply and elegantly dressed in white satin and blonde, trimmed with blush roses and silver leaves, and each had a wreath of blush roses round her hair, at the back of the head. The Duchess of Sutherland, in her robes, and coronet borne by a page. The Queen immediately walked to her chair of state, which was placed before the Royal box, and she sank down on her knees on the velvet cushion, remaining some time in private prayer. She conversed a good deal with the Dean of Westminster and the bishops near her, and seemed to be enquiring how the ceremony was to proceed. Then took place the Recognition, the Archbishop of Canterbury presenting her to the people—the Queen standing; the Peeresses bowing their heads, and everyone shouting with the Peers, ‘God Save Queen Victoria.’ Immediately commenced the Coronation Anthem;—everyone standing—the old Duke of Sussex appearing delighted with the music, beating time, and nodding his head to every note, and the Duchess of Kent beating time with her fan.

The ceremonies then proceeded, and we could see the Queen at the Altar, where she took off her diamond circlet, and looked very well with her plain braided hair. The *act* of her being crowned, we did not see, as a pillar interrupted our view; immediately on the Archbishop placing the crown on, someone below waved a white flag for a signal, and directly after, the guns from the Tower commenced firing, the trumpets sounded, drums beat, the Peers and Peeresses put on their coronets, and in unison with the choir a thousand voices shouted, ‘God save the Queen’ amid the clapping of hands, and waving of handkerchiefs. The

Queen immediately left the seat where she had been crowned, and sat on her chair of state, and no sooner was she seated, than the sun burst forth from the south window, and his beams fell full upon her ; her magnificent crown glittering in its light with all the hues of the rainbow.

Many other ceremonies followed after the Bishop of London had preached the sermon, and the Queen retired for a short time. On re-entering she had the robe of cloth of gold put on, and was led to the Throne to receive homage ; her attendants standing on the steps leading up to the Throne—and the officers of State standing on each side, at the bottom. The Dukes of Richmond, Norfolk, Lord Melbourne with the Sword of State, Marquis of Conyngham, etc., etc. The Bishops came first, and then the Royal Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex, who embraced her. Her manner was particularly affectionate to the Duke of Sussex, to whom she gave both her hands, and kissed him. Then came the Peers, according to their rank ; the Duke of Wellington was warmly greeted, and also the Marquis of Angelsea ; the only other Peers much noticed were Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne. Poor Lord Rolle, a very infirm and aged man, on reaching the last step but one to the Throne, *rolled* backwards, and fell on the floor ; the surrounding peers raised him up : the Queen turning anxiously to enquire whether he was hurt, and as he ascended the steps again, she rose from her seat, and advanced with her hand out to meet him : an act of kindness and good feeling that was welcomed with an enthusiastic burst of applause.

A most amusing scene behind the Throne was the scramble for the Coronation medals—the little Pages enjoying it amazingly, and the Gold Sticks and others joining in the fray, for in their eagerness they knocked one another down, without any ceremony, and the Peeresses were groping about

in all directions as the Earl of Surrey threw the medals amongst them.

The doing homage being over, Mr. Lemon came to us to take us down to wait for the carriage, and we luckily fell in with his brother, Mr. Edward Lemon, who begged us to hasten, and get up to the leads outside the Abbey, to see the Procession on its way to the Palace. Without any introduction, or another word, I found my arm within the *strange man's*, and away we went, as fast as we could, up an immense number of stone stairs, all in the dust and dirt, to the great detriment of satin dresses and shoes. Such a narrow place ! and some going up, and some coming down. The parapet where we stood was soon filled with ladies, who seemed to think nothing of their beautiful lace dresses, but very coolly located themselves on the leads, to await the procession. My Mr. Lemon took me into the Abbey, on the stone gallery by the north window, where we remained until the Royal party left their box, when we returned to our position on the leads, and I stood on a step just under an arch, to see over the heads of those before me, and such pushing backwards, ladies screaming out that they should be thrown over ! My companion's arm supported me, and he completely held me on, and took all possible care of my blonde cape and shawl. He was a nice *larky* man, and I felt at home with him immediately. Anne and *her* Mr. Lemon we entirely lost sight of, for some time.

It is impossible to describe the splendour of the different equipages. The effect was beautiful from our elevated position, the sun shining brilliantly on the magnificent cortège ; the different galleries crowded with people ; the tops of houses and every place occupied ; flags flying, and bells ringing, horses prancing : a most animated scene. There were a dozen Royal carriages, and six horses each. A

hundred Yeomen of the Guard, etc., preceded the Queen's State carriage ; the Household troops with the band playing 'God save the Queen.' On the Queen's appearance, a thousand voices' rent the air, and the carriage moved very slowly towards Great George Street. The effect of the procession as it wound round from the Abbey into Great George Street and then into Parliament Street was very fine.

When we left our station, we saw Anne and Mr. L. and we followed them as quickly as we could, down the narrow stairs. It really was a work of difficulty descending in clouds of dust and dirt. When we reached the lower part of the Abbey, we lost sight of our friends, and Mr. Edward and I found ourselves alone, we did not know where ; we retraced our steps in the dark passages, and at last, in some part of the Abbey, popped upon an old lady and her daughter, who seemed delighted at the sight of 'Edward.' They proved to be Mrs. James Lemon's mother and sister, and they followed us to the north entrance to look for James. People standing in crowds, waiting for their carriages. I was far too tired to enjoy the *fun* of the thing, and went on whithersoever they led me, in a passive state of non-resistance. However, in the covered passage we saw Mr. L. and Anne, who wondered what had become of me—and there we stood, as others did, for an hour and a half, in the hope of hearing our carriage called ; and Anne and I were sure that neither of the *men* relished the addition of the *old* lady to our party. Mr. Anderson, in his Yeomanry uniform, came and shook hands with me, he and Mrs. A. waiting for their carriage, and little Lord Worsley I saw half a dozen times in the same uniform. Oh ! a *seat* of *any* kind would have been worth a guinea, and ladies most splendidly dressed, were sitting *à la Turque*, on the floor.

At last Anne and I mounted the wooden barrier, and there

we sat, eating our biscuits, Anne taking charge of the *Gold Stick*, whilst Mr. L. went for some refreshment, and 'Edward' was despatched to see where the carriage was. After a *long time*, he returned, telling us it was at the far end of Parliament Street, so after sitting a little longer we determined to walk to it, as many other ladies did so. We took the young lady with us, leaving the old one to take care of herself, and wait for her own carriage. We had not reached Great George Street before, to our joy, we saw the carriage coming, and to our amazement, Edwin joined us at the same time. It was delicious to throw oneself on the seat, and drive off.

Mr. E. L. bade us adieu, and without any material stoppage, we arrived at 306 Regent Street at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 o'clock.

Our first enquiry of Teddy, was *how* he managed to get up to us, and to pass the military and police. He got, somehow or other, through the crowd, into Great George Street and the police would not let him stir a step, until he bethought him of saying he wanted to go and speak to one of the officers on duty that he knew. The police asked him 'Which officer?' and he pointed to one, saying 'That one': upon which he was allowed to pass, and he went up to him, and told him he was waiting for some ladies in the Abbey, who had no one to see them out, but himself, and he requested he might be allowed to pass. The officer laughed, and said 'As *ladies* were in the case, he could not object,' and gave orders that Edwin might stand near him, and move when he pleased.

Dinner was a treat, having ate nothing but a few biscuits, for *fourteen* hours. Old Dudley came to hear our adventures. Edwin got a coach for *four pounds* to go with the Lemons to see the illuminations and fireworks in the Park. They could not persuade me to go with them, and on their departure at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9, I retired to the arms of Mor-

pheus. Edwin and I agreeing that *one* such day was enough in *one's* life. Anne came home at *half past one*, delighted with what she had seen, and we were both tolerably *seedy* the next day. .

Written at Milton Vicarage.

July, 1838.

F. C. B.—

PATHWAYS.

*The dark, delicate horned hooves,
The fragile, fleet feet of the Deer,
Have traced deep narrow grooves,
Here, there, far and near.
Paths in the sighing grass,
That lead nowhere for human feet,
Towards the bog they pass,
Till reeds and the tufted marsh delete
Them quite . . . These strange ephemeral ways
Where the wild Deer pass . . .
This winding wandering maze
Through the white whispering grass.*

PHILIPPA GALLOWAY.

Cumloden, 1937.

DARK HORSES.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

[At Merton Magna, in East Devon, live Richard Challice, wheelwright, Ivy, his wife, Leonard, Samson, and Linda, his children, and Verity, his old mother. Simon Pye, friendly, retired neighbour, engages Richard to look after his orchard and Linda as maidservant: he makes friends with the Challices and gives Richard his dream, a piece of land on which is a disused lime-kiln.]

V.

GERALD.

SIMON PYE was under no illusion as to the meaning of his son's visit. They had not met for three years and, on the last occasion, Gerald desired a contribution to help him from passing difficulties. Thought of him never created any anxiety in his father's mind because the young man possessed good intellect and concentrated every thought and energy upon himself. He was gifted and could claim that somewhat horrible quality: an old head on young shoulders. The age did not appear in Gerald's striking and handsome features, but in a mind of singular acuteness that lent to his manner of life prevision, caution and a miser's instinct of self-control in certain vital directions. He was sensual, but curbed his passions the better to enjoy them. He devoted immense attention to a very fine body and rejoiced in keeping it perfect. He had never done one useful thing, devoting existence to his own satisfaction alone; but unlike an average, dissolute youngster, Gerald brought the common sense and self-denial of a mature man to guard him against excess, or any course of action that must impair his constitution and endanger his credit balance with nature. None of this

appeared and only a very subtle student of physiognomy had read into Gerald's eyes the thoughts that sometimes glazed them and gave a glimpse into the secret chambers of his mind. His most challenging, superficial quality was charm. His voice rang mellow and kindly ; his expression was amiable. The majority of his acquaintance had never glimpsed the truth about him and women found him intensely attractive. He could think for others, but never for nothing. He looked far ahead, always weighed the possible value of creating a friendship, never quarrelled openly, but never forgave a wrong when it was inflicted upon him. He had the art to hit back and the self-control to keep the pleasure of revenge to himself. Thus he passed for a well-meaning and good-hearted young man and his baneful endowments were not suspected.

In person Gerald stood a foot taller than his father and was gracefully put together. He took plenty of exercise and kept hard and healthy. Good health indeed exuded from him, and his cheerfulness alone sufficed to make him friends without the tact that always accompanied it. His features he inherited from his mother. They were large and regular. His mouth was full-lipped, yet cleanly turned, his nose high in the nostril and well modelled. His hair was brown with a natural curl, but he kept it short and shaved clean. His teeth were perfect and his grey eyes, under big, dark eyebrows, bright and shifty as an April sky. He could face women with them steadily enough and make them glow like stars ; but not men, and yet nothing to be described as furtive distinguished them. They moved this way and that with quick glances. Only when he was alone did the curtain sometimes rise upon his mask and its features grew older, harder, in an eerie fashion. Then he looked wise, with an inner wisdom his fellow-creatures had never discerned.

Gerald dressed somewhat loudly and his natural restraint did not prevent lack of taste where clothes were concerned. He possessed a native instinct for fine feathers, and since its practice did not interfere with his manner of life, he decked himself rather gaudily. He wore a sporting sort of garments. He was not aware that they stamped him, or negated the status of 'gentleman' he always jealously claimed. Nor, perhaps, had he modified his luxurious tweeds and red waistcoat with brass buttons, even had he appreciated his error, for he knew by experience that such feminine birds as he might cultivate appreciated gay plumage in the male. He was vain and liked praise, but far too sagacious to be deceived by applause from his own sex. He judged of human character fairly correctly by reason of native insight; but those with whom he consorted were much of one pattern and presented no very difficult problems. His knowledge was definite, but limited, since he only envisaged his fellow-creatures from the personal angle and felt solely interested in their possibilities of usefulness. That fact, however, none guessed before his genial approach and warmth of manner. His quality of charm and power to please created the immense self-confidence those gifts are apt to engender, and Gerald would face high or low alike without a thought of failure. He knew the value of his voice and his smile and the actor's gifts behind them.

The young man lived in London and kept a modest establishment. He changed his lodgings from time to time and never entertained, or invited acquaintance to join him except at houses of public entertainment. He owned a powerful sporting motor-car which he drove himself; but since it was a costly machine, he did not now drive to Devon in it. He came to ask for money, but sight of such a car had not helped the cause with his father and Gerald therefore

took train to Redchester, and took a taxi-cab out to Merton Magna in time for tea. No countryside, unless it embraced a race-course, offered the least interest to him ; but it was typical of his touch that he began by praising the beauties of Simon's home and the charms of woodland, meadowland and river valley that surrounded it.

'Jolly glad to see you again, my dear Dad,' he said, as he shook his father's hand and beamed upon him. 'And what a perfectly glorious corner you've found for yourself, sir ! Natural beauty on every side and a jolly house you've built ! Don't think I didn't want to run down as soon as you came into residence—I did ; but somehow the chance never happened. I work jolly hard, you know. You need to in my business.'

Simon surveyed his son and perceived his splendid physical condition. He noted the familiar, challenging tweeds, the flamboyant red waistcoat and silk handkerchief to match it.

'You look well, Gerald,' he said. 'Obviously you are exceedingly fit, and still, no doubt, fit for nothing, I suppose.'

His son laughed and clapped the older man on the shoulder.

'Too bad, Dad—after all these years ! But as for you, you look younger. I swear you do. The country's knocked years off you. You're a regular athlete and will walk me off my legs, I expect.'

'Seeing your legs are about twice as long as mine, it ought to be the other way round,' answered Mr. Pye. 'Haven't you got a car ? I should have thought you would have come by road.'

Gerald lied.

'Times are a bit too hard for a car, Governor. But I hope I may be in a position to start one before the winter.'

The young man praised everything and specially dwelt on his father's evident good health.

'Your stiffness has gone,' he said. 'I can see you've cured your rheumatism—the old enemy, Dad.'

'Not at all,' answered Simon. 'You can't cure rheumatism any more than you can cure hereditary gout—you can only fight it with prayer and fasting. May you never be called to the battle.'

'I keep active and feed light,' explained Gerald. 'And I keep my conscience clear, Dad. Nothing like a good conscience—better than Kruschen salts and dumb-bells even.'

'Dear me !' said Simon. 'The old, noble sentiments still in evidence. Many people mistake no conscience for a good one, Gerald, so take heed lest you fall, my boy.'

They drank tea together and by common consent delayed the inevitable reasons for their meeting until another day ; but after a meal Simon took Gerald for a walk beside the river, listened without any conviction to his rhapsodies at the evening light upon the water, and presently lectured him.

'Your mode of life is, I imagine, unchanged ?' he asked, and the young man admitted that it was so.

'I still keep the flag flying and am pretty well known as a "gentleman backer," Dad,' he answered.

After brief silence, Simon asked another question.

'You do not allow yourself much leisure for serious reading—philosophy and sociology and so forth, I expect ?'

'Afraid not, Father. One ought, I know, to have an intelligent sort of interest in things like that, and I always tell myself I will some day ; but the turf is rather an exacting mistress. I'm a great student of form, and that means a good bit of reading—scientific in a way and part of my business.'

Mr. Pye made no comment on this apology.

'One may take it, then, that you have never heard of that noble and eminent character, Felix Adler ?' he asked.

Gerald shook his head.

‘Never till this auspicious moment, Dad.’

‘Adler was a notable humanist and did much practical and precious work in the world,’ explained Simon. ‘His writings and the accounts handed down concerning his theories are very valuable in my opinion. He attached vast importance to self-respect, Gerald, and he believed that our struggle for self-respect is a sign of the divinity latent in mankind—an even mightier thing than the struggle for existence itself.’

Young Pye concealed a yawn.

‘Jolly interesting, Dad,’ he said.

‘Yes, jolly interesting to any reflective mind. Since I came to live in the country I have seen many poor, humble people struggling to preserve their dignity and self-respect against crushing odds. But I have seldom observed well-to-do and prosperous people give the subject a thought. There is very little self-respect in the world to-day. If there were more, we should hear protests against the disgraceful, national events recorded in the newspapers and the oceans of cruelty and barbarism set flowing round the earth. But self-respect for suffering humanity at large awakens no universal and righteous indignation.’

‘All these blackguard dictators,’ suggested Gerald. ‘No better than a lot of gunmen, Dad. National enemies, Number One, Two and Three.’ •

‘No passionate protest rings round civilisation,’ continued Mr. Pye. ‘We only think of these base degradations in terms of politics and trade. Our statesmen will shake any brutal hand rather than see our own safety threatened. We cower and cringe before the truculent might of other countries, and self-respect goes by the board unmarked. We don’t appear to miss it, or feel ourselves any the smaller

for its loss. Not so did we stand in the council chambers of Europe when Napoleon fell.

‘However,’ continued Simon, ‘these generalities won’t interest you. I want to be personal and waken your own self-respect in the matter of your own life, my son. The existence that you have chosen to live is a mean existence—a shoddy, selfish, useless existence. The world would be cleaner and more wholesome if horse-racing were swept neck and crop out of it.’

‘Damn it all, Dad—the sport of kings !’

‘The sport of kings makes no appeal to me,’ answered Mr. Pye. ‘There is a very ugly back-side to the sport of kings, Gerald. I am no kill-joy either and would not have you deny yourself the pleasure it gives you ; but I do say that now—in sight of thirty years old—you might find some better and worthier occupation and opening for your abundant energies than to live on the race-course. Self-respect should create this conviction in you. And I make bold to say that the same idea must have occurred to you occasionally, if only on your bad days when you lost money.’

Gerald made no immediate answer to this challenge, though he could have said much in support of himself. But he knew his arguments would carry little weight with his father. He sneered out of sight at the old man’s platitudes, but his cue to-day was easily taken.

‘You make me feel small, Dad,’ he answered presently. ‘I know every word you say is true and I have felt just such twinges of conscience as you suggest—not only on bad days, but good ones. A man ought to do something with his life besides preserve it for his own selfish amusement. You said just now that it was no good keeping fit if you were content to be fit for nothing. Of course that’s very true indeed and it hit me harder than you think. I shan’t forget

a word you've told me, and if you've got a book or two in your library you'd like me to read, I'll take them with me and promise to read them.'

'I've got a hundred,' answered Simon. 'I have a hundred that would give you plenty of material for sane thoughts, and they are all very much at your service.'

'There's a fog creeping over the river—bad for you, I expect,' suggested the younger. 'Better turn, Dad.'

He was kindly and thoughtful. He confessed his errors and believed himself capable of curing them. His tact was admirable ; but Simon said very little after his admonition. He had heard his son's noble sentiments and been the subject of his devoted filial attention so often when the case demanded it. These exercises of charm and tact, therefore, awakened little greater belief than had he seen them on the stage.

They returned at seven o'clock to the simple evening meal that Simon always ate at that hour. He had made some slight additions for his son, but not anything of a sort to interest Gerald. The young man presently appeared in a dinner jacket and dress shirt. Evening dress suited him exceedingly well and he knew it ; but his father begged that he would not be at the trouble to change again.

'You'll get nothing worth all that splendour here,' he said. 'It's wasted on my roast and boiled, and on me too. In fact I don't like it.'

'Never again then, Dad. Only donned for a sign of respect,' vowed Gerald.

And then he enjoyed his first sight of Ethelinda, who waited on them. Simon saw him start and concentrate when the girl appeared and marked his son appraising her from under his eyelashes as she ministered to their needs. Mr. Pye was secretly amused but scented no danger. Gerald's entanglements of the past had never involved a woman, and

Simon until now had judged that they did not interest him. But Gerald became very bright and entertaining at dinner, tuning his vivacity to the increased audience.

Linda had already found matter for interest in Mr. Pye's visitor and, when unpacking his suitcase, been faced with quite a new experience. His garments, his toilet requisites, his silken pyjamas were a strange and wonderful spectacle, for never in her former place had such remarkable material confronted her. She marvelled that her commonplace employer should possess such a remarkable son and, as she waited at table, considered Gerald quite the most striking male she had ever seen. He belonged to another world and much that he said she could not even understand. The contrast between him and his father astounded Linda, and it was that she dwelt upon to Mr. Pye's housekeeper when the dinner had ended.

'You'd almost think it was contrary to nature for a go-by-the-ground little gentleman like master to have such a grand sort of a son,' she said. But Mrs. Butters explained it.

'They commercials that make money often give their childer bigger advantages than what they had themselves,' she told Linda, 'and so you'll see a retired tradesman with a son a gentleman—to the eye if no more.'

'There's a style about him and he's amazing handsome,' declared Linda.

'Looks are nothing,' replied Mrs. Butters. 'They come mostly from the mothers, and beautiful mothers will often bring handsome sons even if their fathers ain't no account. Beauty belongs outside breeding. You can see that for yourself in the looking-glass, Linda.'

Simon always retired at ten o'clock and his son did likewise, but next morning Gerald was up before the household and

descended to the river lightly clad for an early bathe. Linda beheld him on his way and presently, looking out of the front door, saw the visitor swimming with vigour against the gentle currents of Exe. He used an over-arm stroke and she admired the sight.

'Lord !' she thought, 'if there was anybody could learn me to swim, I'd go out at morning light and love it.'

Soon after nine o'clock Mr. Pye took breakfast and learned of his son's operations.

'I never heard of anybody going swimming here,' he said, 'but a very healthy and proper thing to do.'

Gerald knew that his father permitted himself one cigar a week and was used to smoke it on Sunday. He had brought a box of expensive Havannahs and made some parade with the gift.

'I remembered your liking, Dad, and I hope you'll give me the pleasure of seeing you smoke a cigar every day for a change. You can well afford that little luxury, and I know somebody who can send you first-rate smokes a lot cheaper than you'd be able to buy them yourself.'

He looked after his parent at breakfast and protested that he did not eat enough.

'You want somebody to see you treat yourself more generously, Dad,' he said.

Simon listened to his solicitude, but made few comments. The scene was a repetition of others like it and Gerald's technique had improved. He praised everything, asked questions and declared keen interest in the orchard. He reminded his father about the books and chattered amiably and intelligently while he made a large breakfast.

When the meal was ended Mr. Pye spoke.

'Well,' he said, 'now you've uttered your fine sentiments, Gerald, and spread your ground-bait, you'd best to start and

see what you can catch. Come in my book room presently and I'll hear what's brought you.'

'That's a bit dry, Dad ! But this rare place has made me forget what I came for very nearly. Nót quite though. I'll be there in half an hour. You're such a one for getting down to brass tacks.'

He told his story later.

'You were reminding me what I owe to myself, Dad,' he began, 'but just at the minute it's rather a question of what I owe to somebody else. I've been a fool and broken a rule—always a fool thing to do if the rule's a good one. I've made an iron rule not to play cards and then, under press of circumstances and to oblige some friends, I joined a pretty hot gamble and got it in the neck. Serve me right you'll say, and I don't deny it. A bit of silly weakness and I got the reward that weakness deserves. In a word, I dropped two hundred quid—a debt of honour as they say. A lot of money to lose in a night and I haven't the shadow of an excuse. I can borrow it, of course, on my expectations, but there's only one person I would borrow from if I could help it, and that's you, Dad. And I know I can't borrow from you, because you won't lend money. It's been a lifelong rule with you.'

'Have you borrowed money on your expectations at any time ? You'll come into your mother's money in a year now.'

'Never one farthing, Father. I've lived on my income and kept within it. But I haven't saved. You see, one has to travel a good bit—to the Northern and Midland race meetings—and one has to dress well and live like a gentleman. But I don't waste money and always live in very modest apartments.'

'And how does your precious business serve you ? You

say you live within your means. Don't you make any money at all ?'

'Plenty, but it's up and down. I won't pretend that I make much money. You have a good spell, and then comes a bad spell. That's why what you said last night made a pretty strong appeal. I may go on till I come in to Mother's money, and then my idea was to consult you about an investment—a partnership, or something. I'm not afraid of work. I'm proud of our good name and all that sort of thing and I don't want to cadge. I never have and I never will. But if, for once, you could see your way to break your rule and lend me the money, you could trust me to return it quickly—for my own sake as well as yours, because I shouldn't have a peaceful moment till it was paid back.'

Simon lighted his pipe and, without any immediate comment, considered what he had heard. Meantime Gerald spoke again.

'I'm due for a bit of good luck, to balance rather a frosty spell. It's curious how good follows bad in a sort of mathematical progression if you bet regularly. And given the good luck, you'd very quickly have the money back with my blessing, Dad.'

'Sounds very suent, as we say in the West Country,' answered Simon. 'You've got a nice voice and a glib tongue, Gerald. If you'd been a commercial traveller now, or an advertising tout, you'd be making big money with your natural gifts. But I've heard this sort of thing before.'

The young man did not answer. He sat quietly with his hard grey eyes fixed on his father. Every word he had uttered was a lie. He had charged himself with imaginary folly and pretended a debt that was non-existent, in fact. He never played cards and he was in debt to nobody ; but he wanted a little extra money, and having calculated that he

had not troubled his father for four years, guessed that he might now do so with reasonable hope of success. He had never failed before, but he had never asked for so much before. Another purpose besides the desire for cash had inspired Gerald's visit. Mr. Pye was a well-to-do man and in due course his son counted to inherit his money. He never forgot this and felt that, after so long an absence, it would be politic in any case to look his father up and learn the elder's state of health and general activities. He did not fear that Simon would marry again and knew that his wedded life had been unhappy ; but it occurred to him that the elder might be making friends and acquiring new interests.

Gerald spoke once more, since Mr. Pye now maintained a long silence and picked up the morning paper.

'Don't think I've only come to bleed you, Dad. It won't make any difference to me if you don't see your way. In fact I didn't expect you to—such a lot of money as that. I shan't think any the worse of you if you stick to your principles, sir—on my honour I shan't. But it was high time that I paid my respects and saw your new home, and I congratulate you upon it. A beautiful little house that seems to breathe dignity and peace. Have you made any congenial acquaintance round about ? But I know you were never much one for society.'

'I have made some friends among the farmers and the folk,' answered Simon. 'I find them courteous and glad to see me, as far as I can judge. A few gentlefolk live in the big houses and I meet them occasionally in connection with village interests—on committees and so on ; but of course not socially.'

'I'll bet you're as good as any of them and better than most,' said Gerald.

‘That I couldn’t tell you,’ answered his father. ‘I know nothing about them except that they seem very worthy men and employ labour. We have none out of work in these parts, save a few wasters who object to work.’

He took up the newspaper and ran through it quickly.

‘I’m going to-day to a very fine spot known as Raddon Top. It is a considerable hill crowned with a little colony of fir trees in which the wind makes a melodious sound. From this height you can get a wonderful view all round you—a free horizon ; and I like to take my sandwiches and my bottle of ale to this place from time to time in fine weather. To-day I hope you will join me. It is five miles.’

‘Delighted to, Dad. I love a walk. But ten miles is a good day’s work for you.’

‘Occasionally,’ said Simon, ‘I go fifteen miles and am none the worse. Now amuse yourself. We start at noon.’

He returned to his paper and Gerald, who was exceedingly quick of understanding, felt very little doubt that his plea would be successful. He hoped to get the money without any conditions. But Simon spoke again as his son rose to leave the room.

‘You praised my good sense last night. Then you can pay me a week’s visit at the shortest and hear a bit more of it. I’ll bring you acquainted with one or two here who are made of sense and made of truth. They’ll be an eye-opener for you if you’ll heed them. As for the money, I’ll turn it over, and it will take me more than twenty-four hours to do so. Don’t mention it again till I do myself, please.’

‘Trust me for that,’ promised Gerald. ‘And it’s more than good of you, Dad, even to think of it.’

He knew the battle won and his thoughts regretted one supreme fact after he had left his father.

‘I might have stung him for another hundred while I was about it,’ mused Gerald.

VI.

FOUNDATIONS LAID.

Mr. Pye's son planned his days with customary calculation and foresight. He fitted into the picture of his father's colourless life, showed cheerful interest in its details and occupied himself with a growing amusement in Linda Challice. He concealed this operation very easily from Mr. Pye and proceeded subtly to learn what he might of the girl herself. Her status Simon mentioned incidentally and told Gerald that her family were his friends and that her father worked for him in connection with his orchard. To win these independent persons and thus justify himself in approaching Linda was the young man's first task, for he guessed that it would please his father if he were friendly with Richard Challice and create a natural introduction to the girl herself. That done, he would quickly learn whether pursuit would prove worth the trouble.

He did not weary his father by too close attention, but absented himself sometimes so that Simon might follow his methodical habits. Gerald paid an occasional evening visit to the ‘Cat and Fiddle,’ where his red waistcoat entertained the company ; but they soon took him seriously and came to be impressed by his generosity in the matter both of physical and mental refreshment. He was at home in a bar, and since every countryman loves the lore of horses and of sport, his varied information and wide experience of the race-course won him respect. He afforded rich entertainment for the younger men and incidentally made the acquaintance of Leonard and Samson Challice, who soon

tended to make him a hero and envied his quality. He waited on his father when desired to do so and preserved the utmost cheerfulness and good nature wherever he might find himself; but his growing preoccupation was soon Linda and from the first he felt her unconscious provocation. She was the vigorous type, abounding in health and life, that most attracted him. He approached with infinite caution, strove to create the necessary interest and watched her reaction step by step. He summed her up accurately enough, guessed that she had yet to know passion and, in their chance conversations, sounded her to learn the nature of her interests and the bent of her mind. A general impression once gathered, it remained to be seen whether any response to himself was forthcoming, and he knew that if that happened she would be at pains to conceal it; but he also knew the least dawn of such an emotion must be evident to him. Gerald was well aware of his own forceful effect on virgin minds, and he guessed from the first that it might be in his power to make Linda love him.

He cultivated Richard Challice and would stroll out before breakfast and have speech with him. For the wheelwright's work began long before the labours of his smithy called him and he often laboured for an hour or two in the long summer mornings before his breakfast. Sometimes he found work around Mr. Pye's apple trees and sometimes toiled away at the business of clearing his own land and opening it up.

Richard had taken the visitor at his face value and found him genial and pleasant, with an abundant good humour that his father lacked. But he delighted to praise Simon to his son and declare the privilege he found it to know him, work for him and enjoy his friendship.

'He gave me this fine spot of land, sir—just a gift for no call whatsoever but the natural kindness of his heart.'

So Challice told Gerald and the younger laughed.

'Just like him, my dear man,' he answered. 'The Dad would give his head away if it could come off.'

A general opinion of Gerald proved much in his favour and the amiable criticism circulated as he hoped that it would. Linda, visiting her home on her evenings out, heard Leonard and his brother loud in praise of Mr. Pye's son. They were no little interested to hear whether he ever spoke to her, and how he got on with his parent, and why he had come at all. For it seemed to them that, from Gerald's point of view, existence at Merton Magna must be but a dreary hiatus in the grand and sportsmanlike life he appeared to enjoy.

Gerald was doomed to hear his father on the subject of women and declared great personal ignorance concerning them.

'Nothing stands still,' said Simon, 'and nothing has changed more than the relations between the sexes. When I was young, women received no education to name, but they got more respect and consideration from the better sort of men than they do to-day. Now that they are in the market of industry, challenge men on their own ground and prove to be their equals in black-coated work, they don't command the old chivalrous respect. They are not put on pedestals same as they were and they don't want to be. They've come down and go their own way and don't feel a husband and children to be the fine goal their grandmothers thought. They find their brain power equal to reaching better goals and know a man isn't the high-water mark of a successful life. They understand a great deal more about men than they did. Education's done that for 'em, though there'll always be plenty no doubt to put a man first.'

Gerald declared a respect for the sex that he was very far from feeling.

‘I’ve never fallen in love yet,’ he said, ‘but I might think of marriage. I’m not one to sneer at the women and I know a good few married men that owe a lot of their success to clever partners.’

Simon allowed several days to pass before returning to the gift and Gerald was well content that he should. He pursued his business by post and devoted his wits to Linda. She concealed her interest carefully enough for some time, and then, little by little, he began to know that he had awakened it. He held off awhile after that before entering upon the second stage of the siege; but he advanced his purpose implicitly outside the radius of the girl herself and created friendship with her people. For, when the time came, he desired to have them on his side. He looked far ahead, made friends at the ‘Cat and Fiddle,’ gave Leonard Challice a racing tip and made two sovereigns for him.

Then came an afternoon when Simon went to drink tea at Church Cottage and his son accompanied him. It was an opportunity that Gerald desired and he took advantage of it, bringing his charms to bear on Ivy Challice and excelling in apt speeches concerning her husband and her sons. He made one mistake in tactics, however, though he never found it out.

Gerald always carried a pair of gloves, and when he had shaken hands with Granny Challice, her sharp eyes noted them. She turned to Simon.

‘Your young man puts me in mind of old days, Mr. Pye,’ she said. ‘You was asking about the dead trades I could call home, but I forgot gloves. That was to Chumleigh half a century and more ago. The glove-makers would send down the leathers all ready and cut, and the Chumleigh women sewed ’em with perfect and famous stitchery. Very renowned for it they were; but they’ve all gone

now since every hand's turn has got to be done by machines.'

Mr. Pye noted these facts ; but he made little conversation during tea, leaving his son to do so. Gerald chattered cheerfully to Ivy Challice and extolled her boys.

'Tell me they'd like to "go foreign,"' he said, 'and just the stuff to make fine pioneers, Mrs. Challice.'

'That's what I say, sir,' she answered. 'The dream of their lives ; and I'd rise up and go with them to-morrow ; but my husband's all for home. He don't think Len and Sam would make good.'

'Of course they would, given the chance,' declared Gerald. 'They're just the clever sort to make their way.'

Leonard was present, though his father and brother had not yet returned from work.

'I ain't the man my father is and I very well know it,' he confessed, as he often did.

'You ain't ; but there's no call to bleat about it in company, Len,' snapped his grandmother.

'I was going to say I'm different,' explained the lad. 'It takes all sorts to make a world, and I've got a feeling I'd do so well as another and help to make some part of the empire. But Father says 'tis only the gipsy in me.'

'Jolly fine people the gipsies, Len,' declared Gerald. 'I meet 'em on the race-courses. They're not afraid of work, eh, Granny ?'

He addressed Verity, who, much resenting this familiar appeal, looked at him, but did not answer.

Leonard continued to explain that he was undervalued by his father. He sometimes felt the craving for sympathy that forgets shame, and he had found Gerald in sympathy with him before.

'I'd say my father rates me and Sam too low,' he ventured.

‘He said yesterday that I’d never make up into a game-keeper—too soft and too idle. He said a spit-dog worked harder than what I do.’

Mr. Pye endeavoured to change the embarrassing subject of Leonard’s weakness.

‘A spit-dog? What is, or was, a spit-dog, Mrs. Challice?’ he asked.

He addressed Verity, who had finished her tea and lighted her pipe.

‘I’ve known ’em and seen ’em to their work,’ she said. ‘You’ll not find ’em now and I doubt the breed’s gone. But my father’s father, Noah Tarleton, he had a valiant spit-dog and she’d stand to work in her little dog-wheel, stumping round and round till the joint was cooked. A short-legged, little black bitch she was, and the joy of old Noah’s heart. She travelled with the camp, and when she wasn’t to work would often go hunting and fetch in a rabbit.’

‘A lesson to idle people,’ said Gerald. ‘If Len works as hard as that, he’s all right.’

‘He don’t work as hard as that, and his father knows it,’ retorted Verity. ‘He’ll bring in a game bird sometimes that he didn’t ought—I grant so much.’

Then she relapsed into silence and Gerald ignored her. She was studying him carefully, none the less, as he presently praised her son.

‘Dick’s a lesson, Mrs. Challice,’ he said to Ivy. ‘A grand man—the old yeoman type that you read about; but I never saw such another. Rooted in the land and wise to everything about it. I hope he may get his kiln going; but as yet he tells me there’s no great promise. To hear him talk you’d say there was a gold mine hidden there.’

‘He’s a very hopeful fashion of man, sir. His geese are always swans till he finds different.’

‘Dauntless pluck, I call it. And I’ll bet you’re as plucky yourself, even if you’ve got to put him on the curb sometimes.’

‘We don’t see alike always,’ admitted Ivy. ‘To live with undying hope is trying now and again, when you don’t share the hope.’

Simon expected that Dick’s mother would intervene ; but Verity made no comment on these opinions. In a pause, however, after Gerald had praised the tea and asked for another cup, the old woman addressed Mr. Pye.

‘You was asking about the art of snuffing candles when you see that old pair of silver snuffers on the mantelshelf,’ she said. ‘I forgot it last time you was here, but minded a thought about ’em after. I knew a serving maid at the house where Linda worked before she came to you. It’s years and years ago, granted, but she’d tell how, when she was a young girl, she had to visit the parlour three times of a winter evening before bedtime to snuff the candles. ’Twas part of her duties so to do. Her mother, or else her grandmother it might have been, was one of they pedlar women common in them days. She would carry brandy hid under her shawl. A cunning old piece and done very clever by it. She was suspected ; but none of her friends and customers ever told against her, so she was safe, because in her time the law wouldn’t allow for her person to be touched by no officer, so they couldn’t dare to search her.’

Simon’s note-book appeared.

‘Good !’ he said. ‘I must set that down, my dear woman.’

Richard Challice and Samson arrived before the visitors had left and delayed them awhile. Gerald in his opening moves with Ethelinda had discovered that the girl’s first devotion belonged to her father, and at this stage of progress

he still sought to ingratiate himself with Dick. There was no difficulty as to that, for the wheelwright always offered friendship for friendship and already entertained some admiration for the young man. As yet no shadow clouded this regard. Gerald on his side praised her father to Linda very heartily, finding that she would always delay and listen to him when he did so. From Richard to herself was an easy step, and he had now, in the course of five days, established friendly relations with her and begun to learn something of her character. It was frank and direct. She trusted her fellow-creatures and as yet had found no reason to do otherwise. Her life had been devoted to work and such pleasures as came her way were simple and primitive. He found that she was not vain of her exceptional beauty, and when he attained a degree of intimacy to hint at it and become personal, she laughed at him.

Gerald knew that he could not get far until his own growing attraction found some echo in the girl, and he also knew that she must react, if ever she did, on a very much higher plane than any he ever attempted to reach. Her quality was clearly apparent and he perceived from the first that, if he could make her love him, he would need to pretend to a distinction of mind and affect conduct quite alien to the truth. But simulation before the ingenuous Linda presented no problems and, as he began to know intuitively that she found him occupying her thoughts, he pushed forward. They enjoyed many opportunities for meeting and a time came when Gerald began to make opportunities and Linda prepared to grant them.

He was practised in this sort of enterprise and knew with tolerable accuracy how she presently regarded him. In truth, he came as a revelation to Linda, representing possibilities in the male entirely outside her experience or imagina-

tion. Such men as she had known were of her own class and differed only in their appearance and character. Some were better company than others, but all were much of a muchness and none at best had ever done anything more than amuse her and help to pass leisure time. In Gerald Pye she found not only something utterly new, but something fashioned of another clay. Compared with her acquaintance he was rare china to everyday cloam. His father she had never regarded as much different from her experience of other men. He was homely and commonplace ; but the son belonged to another order of beings, just as he belonged to another world. To know him, so Linda told herself, was to know what she understood by a gentleman. All the fine instincts and delicate understandings of the gentle appeared in him. He was considerate, cheerful, courteous. He never said a coarse word, always showed utmost consideration, declared his thanks for the least attention.

For a time she merely admired such a finished product. His manners and bearing, she felt, exactly corresponded with his rare good looks and handsome exterior. Of taste she knew nothing and felt no jar at his obvious lack. Even his clothes seemed very fine to her and she admired the immense care he took of his body and the various appliances and bottled unguents of his toilet. It was seemly, thought Linda, that any man so perfect should devote attention to preserving his perfection. His manners also delighted her. He came to his father's simple table as to a banquet, ate with a moderation and perfection of detail which she began secretly to copy, behaved with an innate refinement that made his father's more unstudied table manners appear quite rough. As for Gerald's physical appearance, Linda considered him most beautiful. He was far the handsomest man she had ever seen in any class of society ; but beyond these general

impressions of him and the lively interest he had created in her uneventful existence, her thoughts did not extend. When at home she would talk about him without a shade of self-consciousness, declare her admiration and reveal details of Gerald's conversation and habits. But she had no secret reserves, no challenges and no questionings as yet. And he, knowing the state of her mind, was now about to awaken other agitations for Linda. That done, Gerald would swiftly learn whether success or failure awaited him. He had cut a loss on one or two occasions, when the enterprise either threatened to fail or became too complicated ; but he yearned for Linda now with a great yearning, and the fact that old, familiar lies would need to be told before he could hope to secure her deterred him not at all. Imposition is an easy feat for the acute mind when dealing with lesser intellects, and the forthcoming problem, as Gerald saw it, was not to create trust and friendship. He looked beyond, and with horrible sagacity perceived that enemies must be necessary if he were to have his way.

He need not have feared the difficulty of making them. Minds existed already in Merton Magna that, though less educated than his own, were quite as capable of acute thinking. One belonged to a man and one to a woman, and it was Linda herself who set the first in motion, while the second came from her own blood and operated from no stimulus except that awakened by Simon Pye's son himself.

In the case of John Caryl, the first significant and objective effect of knowing Gerald was evinced by Linda, and all unconsciously, without any subjective reason for so doing, she made of John an enemy for young Pye. It was a subtle business and would have elated Gerald not a little had he known it ; but it was natural—so natural that Linda did not

perceive its real significance. She came to feel intensely what she had already felt in a subconscious fashion concerning Caryl and, under the incitement of this new experience of a man, perceived how remote was John from any possible ideal of masculine companionship. Him therefore she had dismissed with kindly words and appreciation for his devotion.

‘We won’t walk no more, Johnny,’ she had said to him after their last evening pilgrimage. ‘You’re quick in the uptake as I well know, and I’ve got to feel same as I’m sure you’ve got to feel, that we don’t get no forwarder. You’ve unfolded your feelings, and everything ever you’ve told me makes me respect you more and care for you less. You mustn’t take it hard, for I’ll hold you a friend to your dying day, I’m sure. But, though you’ve never gone so far as to offer for me, my dear man, I’ve known of course that was in your mind. So we won’t lose no more time walking out. You must look around, Johnny, and you’ll mighty soon find one so good as me or better to get addicted to.’

And Caryl had taken it dumbly, reserving his comments for another ear ; but though a dull man, love quickened his understanding that night, and on a sleepless couch he arrived at correct conclusions which Linda herself had been much astonished to hear. She did not hear them ; but ere long her father did.

Mr. Pye and Gerald stayed but a short time at Church Cottage after Richard and his son returned to tea, and the young man’s effect on the Challice family was hidden from him and his father until long afterwards. They took their leave, and since Simon was already established in the regard of all, their talk ran on Gerald.

Dick praised him for a remarkably attractive young fellow, and Ivy noted one fact.

‘He had a word for all of us and praised me to my face,’

she said. 'It would have been a bit saucy in anybody else, but not from him. You couldn't but feel he'd got a nice mind. And he thinks the world of you, Dick, and sees what's in Len and Sam if ever they have a chance to bring it out. But the funny thing was, he never once mentioned Linda. You'd have thought she must have caught his eye ; and if his father can speak so well of Linda, why didn't he give her a pat on the back ?'

'Girls don't interest him,' said Samson. 'He's all for horse-racing and sport.'

'A wondrous pretty girl like Linda would interest any young man,' answered Ivy. 'Extra handsome fellows like him are always interested in beautiful women.'

'Perhaps he don't think she is beautiful,' suggested Leonard.

'Everybody knows she's beautiful—except herself,' declared Richard. 'But we can't tell a thing about young Pye, save that he's a very pleasant, good-hearted sort of chap. He may be tokened to some London maiden. He gets a lot of letters, so Linda told me.'

They debated the qualities of the visitor and all agreed in commending him, while Richard wondered why he had come and how long he was likely to remain.

'A dead-and-alive life you'd say for such a dashing young man as him,' admitted Ivy ; 'but I hope he'll call in again. He's something new to the likes of us.'

Verity had made no remark of any sort during this conversation and Dick took note of it.

'You're very silent, Mother. We know what you think of Mr. Pye. What do you think of Master Gerald ?' he asked.

Before she could answer, Ivy spoke. She knew very well what the elder's silence denoted.

'He didn't make enough of Granny, so she won't like him I'm afraid, Dick.'

The grandmother took her pipe out of her mouth.

'He's got the red lips of a liar, and the shifty eyes of a liar ; and he is a liar,' she said.

Then she spat in the fire.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD HOUSE.

*Far winks the road of midnight,
Full stares the moon above,
Still stands the house, and empty
Of long-dead folk and love.*

*Within, the moonlight patterns
In snow the dusky glooms
Of naked hall and stairway
And long-deserted rooms.*

*And there through shine and shadow
For ever to and fro
A little lad runs weeping,
And wrings his hands for woe.*

JOHN COGHLAN.

THE TRAGEDY AT CLAREMONT.

Letters from Prince Leopold (uncle to Queen Victoria) to his sister, the Gräfin Mensdorff-Pouilly, now in the possession of her grandson, Count Obersdorf.

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY OSBERT LANCASTER.

Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha is not unknown to English readers in the rôle of correspondent, but the letters which are most familiar are those written at a time when he had long been seated on the Belgian throne, and had already assumed for himself the title of the Nestor of Europe. Those serious, admonitory epistles to his niece were only a part of his prodigious correspondence ; in half a dozen European courts the sound of the post horn was the warning that another bulky packet of advice was on its way from Brussels. The letters, however, which are now printed here for the first time belong to quite another category, and although now and again one notices in certain passages signs which indicate the way in which the writer's character was subsequently to develop, they do reveal in a most striking fashion that behind that imposing façade of political sagacity which the King of the Belgians presents to posterity, there existed, or at least had once existed, a sensitive, affectionate and very human man.

In 1814 London, in company with half the capitals of Europe, was given over to enthusiastic, although slightly previous, peace celebrations. In May there arrived a glittering assortment of European royalties of whom the most important was Tsar Alexander and one of the most insignificant Prince Leopold. The latter, having been driven from his brother's principality by the French, had entered the service of the former, in whose victorious armies he had served with courage and distinction, but without, alas, any great profit to himself. However, although his income

amounted to no more than two hundred a year, he arrived in London fully determined to affect some improvement in his position, and forthwith installed himself over a greengrocer's shop in Marylebone Lane ; a humble lodging, but both cheap and conveniently close to the Russian Embassy in Harley Street.

At the time of this, Leopold's first visit to England, the country's destinies were directed by George, Prince of Wales, acting as Regent for his aged and imbecile father. The animosity with which this prince regarded his wife was notorious, and, at a moment when he was called upon to entertain his fellow sovereigns, highly inconvenient. His relations with his only child the Princess Charlotte were scarcely less embittered. From among the visiting princes he had selected one whom he considered would make a suitable husband for this high-spirited princess, the Prince of Orange. Charlotte herself regarded her proposed husband with the utmost dislike ; partly because he was, as was generally admitted, quite exceptionally plain and partly, no doubt, simply because he had been suggested by her father. Leopold, on the other hand, was very handsome and extremely intelligent. (There had always existed some doubt of the Prince of Orange's mental powers.) Exactly when and where the first meeting of these two young people took place we do not know, but it seems probable that it was arranged by the Grand Duchess of Oldenburg, a sister of the Tsar, an indefatigable intriguer who for reasons of her own disliked the idea of the Dutch match.

While the Regent was still furious over the final breaking of Charlotte's first engagement, Leopold was far too cautious to put himself forward ; moreover, he was soon called away to Vienna to look after the Coburg interests at the Congress. However, he had gained an ally in the Royal Family in the person of his future brother-in-law, the Duke of Kent, who watched over his interests while he was away. Gradually the Regent himself became reconciled to the idea of this match ; Charlotte had been giving

him a great deal of trouble and although his drastic measures of control were fairly effective they still further diminished his almost non-existent popularity. Although he found himself unable to care extravagantly for Leopold, of whose character he had formed a shrewd though rather unfavourable estimate (he always referred to him as Le Marquis Peu-a-peu) the prospect of getting his daughter off his hands finally outweighed all other considerations and at the end of 1815 he sent for Leopold from Berlin. The Prince arrived on the 21st of February, protected from the cold by a long-skirted coat, a muff and a sable boa. His subsequent travels are described in a letter sent home by one of his suite.

BRIGHTON, 26th Feb., 1816.

We left Dover at 8 o'clock in two four-horse carriages, driving through arches of laurel and a curious crowd of both sexes who loudly cheered your prince. . . . Among them were several very beautiful girls, of whom, I am happy to say, there was no lack on the whole of this long journey. These lovely complexions and rounded figures do not fail in their effect !

We drove 43 miles to Rochester where we spent the night, having accomplished this stage in five hours ; the town is picturesquely situated on the banks of the Medway, across which there is a bridge connecting the town with the castle. We resumed our journey on the 21st at 8 sharp and arrived in London at 11 in the morning, where we alighted at Lord Castlereagh's, who was himself still resting after his parliamentary labours which had forced him, in order to prove the opposition wrong, to remain up till four in the morning. His secretary took us to Clarendon House in New Bond Street where accommodation had been secured for the Prince. Lord Castlereagh came there at one o'clock to pay his respects to the Prince and to ask him

to dinner where we found ourselves at 7 o'clock. My Lord Liverpool, first Lord of the Treasury, was also there and after dinner the Prince conferred for a long time with the Foreign Minister ; he was very pleased with this exchange of views. His arrival was reported to the Prince Regent whom an attack of gout had forced to return to Brighton. Here is the actual notice of our arrival in the official Gazette :

‘ Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the destined husband of Princess Charlotte, is arrived ; he landed at Dover on Monday night and arrived in London yesterday morning. He is at Mr. Clarendon’s Hotel. He is tall and well made with a very agreeable countenance. The Populace at Dover saluted him with three hearty cheers on his departure from the ship. He dined yesterday with Lord Castlereagh. His Lordship had an interview with the Prince in the morning and dispatched a messenger with the result to the Prince Regent at Brighton.’

On Thursday, 22nd, the Prince dined again with Lord Castlereagh and various other ministers ; on Friday, 23rd, he accompanied him to Brighton for his presentation to the Prince Regent. The day was fine and the landscape exquisite and we covered the distance, which was 32 miles (*sic*) in five and a half hours, traversing the whole length of the provinces of Surrey and Sussex. Brighton is a beautiful town on the coast, quite new and much frequented by fashionable society for the sake of the sea-bathing. We were quartered in the Pavilion, as the Regent’s residence is called ;] it is decorated and furnished in the Chinese taste, and is illuminated by more than three thousand lamps of opalescent glass, which indeed give a really magnificent effect but also produce an almost unbearable heat ; the gallery is of a quite unusual beauty. At 5 the Prince had his audience with the Regent, and was very content with the result of this first interview.

I was presented to the Duke of Clarence, the Regent's brother, one of the oldest admirals in the kingdom. . . . At 6 o'clock we went in to dinner which lasted until half past nine, which was something of a trial for the Prince as his head is not yet quite healed, however if one does not wish to starve one must accustom oneself to these long sittings which are the rule over here. After dinner the Turkish band opened their concert with the Coburg march ; they are very richly and tastefully dressed and play every day. The Lord Chamberlain's very beautiful daughter, Lady Charlotte Chaldamley (*sic*) in the intervals displayed her skill on the pianoforte, which is really first class. Then Whist and Vingt-et-un were played alternately until 11 o'clock.

On Sunday the 24th the Regent decorated Prince Leopold with the Guelph Order, and Lord Castlereagh in the name of His Royal Highness made known to him the clauses of the marriage contract. It is the same as that drawn up for the Prince of Orange, in so far as I am acquainted with the clauses. The Prince will have an income of £50,000 a year of which £10,000 is for the personal use of the Princess Charlotte ; the rest is entirely at his own disposal. . . . In the event of the Princess pre-deceasing him, the Prince will have £40,000 a year for life. If the Prince dies before the Princess, which Heaven forbid, the Princess will have the whole sum of £50,000 a year.

As the Prince, on account of etiquette, cannot remain in London during the period preceding the wedding, which may be three weeks, he is thinking of spending this time at Weymouth partly for the sake of the sea-bathing, and partly in order to avoid the inquisitive, for you will realise, my dear Count, that our dear Prince, to whom I grow daily more devoted, is the focus of interest for the whole of England.

In this connection it is impossible for his attitude to be more correct than it is.

Their Majesties the Queen and the Princess Charlotte are just this moment arrived and will remain in London until Friday so the first meeting will take place to-night. As my letter must go off to-day I can write no more of this.

The wedding took place on the evening of May 2nd in Carlton House, to which Mr. Nash's Gothic Conservatory doubtless lent a suitably ecclesiastical air, in the presence of a large and distinguished company. Not the least interesting feature of the ceremony was the presence of the Duc d'Orleans, then enjoying one of his periodical and enforced absences from his native land. Nearly twenty years later, as King of the French, he was to occupy, with, one cannot help thinking, rather less distinction, the proud position of the Prince Regent, as Leopold's father-in-law to be, at a similar ceremony in the more bourgeois surroundings of the Tuileries. That night Charlotte and Leopold drove down to Oatlands, the residence of the Duke of York, alone, having defeated the Queen's amiable little plan for sending a lady in waiting with them in order to see that nothing improper occurred in the carriage. Leopold's niece was not, perhaps, after all, the first of the Victorians.

After the honeymoon the Royal pair take up their residence at Claremont and it is from there that Leopold conducts his correspondence with his favourite sister, the Countess Mensdorff-Pouilly.

Meine liebe alte !

It was fortunately impossible for me to answer you by the last post. I will now reply to all the questions in your letter one by one. First let me tell you that the weather here has been exactly the opposite to your unheard-of rain, very fine and dry since February, and the last few days quite

exceptionally so. . . . My little white mouse's health, God protect her, also improves and whatever time and advice may finally achieve, we are prepared to rejoice that she is already so much better. As to our coming on the continent, we are indeed most eager to do so, but it will entirely depend on time and circumstances, and whether or not we shall manage it, one cannot yet say. . . .

Now for a point in your letter which has rather riled me, namely *Thümmel*. I will now explain to you briefly how this has come about : he wrote a very cavalier letter to Hardenbruck from Paris saying that he was coming to London and in *his* opinion we should without doubt *put him up*. You know yourself that Thümmel was never particularly well known to me. He lived for a couple of years in Coburg, but I know no more of him apart from the fact that I then once or twice exchanged a few words with him, but he was certainly never a protégé of mine ; then I saw him once in Paris and that was all. You may gather that I was a little surprised, then, at this manner of announcing himself. We have not got a very large house in London and moreover were it larger I would still not have anyone to stay who was unknown to Charlotte. At Claremont we are customarily four or five at table and my wife, particularly when she is not well, makes no attempt at a morning toilet. . . . Think what a bore an *entirely unknown* man would be for her ! The effrontery of this young fellow really rather amuses me for there is something genial about it ! Hardenbruck who is already slightly acquainted with Ernst (*Leopold's brother, the Duke of Saxe Coburg*) intends to write to him, lest it should not otherwise occur to him that if he, Hardenbruck, takes it into his head to go to Coburg, he intends taking up his abode in the Palace, so much more unusual is Herr von Thümmel's idea of quartering himself on

us ! when he is quite unknown, even by sight, to Charlotte ! After Hardenbruck had written to him saying that our house was too small to accommodate him, we heard nothing of Thümmel for some time after his arrival over here, which was no great sorrow to me. As soon as he had presented himself, I invited him one day when we had foreigners present, among whom the most important was our minister here with whom I had business. As soon as I had spoken to this gentleman I spoke in a very friendly manner to Thümmel and presented him to Charlotte. Since then he has been invited to us every week, that is when we have been receiving, for we have no desire to see him en famille. So he has no right to complain. If his journey and residence here have proved expensive I am very sorry, but I did not ask him to come and I explained to him before I set out for England that I could on no account take him with me. Here he has nothing in the world to do, and as he does not depart it will presumably end in a request for an advance in order to pay his debts. I have written to Ernst saying that I am really in the highest degree mortified that he (Thümmel) should have made himself, by his dancing and general behaviour, so constantly ridiculous in London first, because he has a great deal of good in him and it is therefore a pity, that he should waste his time in Society, and second because he is an acknowledged Hofkavalier of Coburg. He causes the most inconceivable offence with a light-heartedness that quite amazes one. Ernst can explain this to you. In any other country he would be tolerated, but people here are not so long-suffering. His visiting-cards have already made him famous ; he distributes, unfortunately, old-fashioned cards of enormous size with Cupids in relief, and dating from four years ago ; in the middle of which is inscribed *Le Baron Mauritz de Thümmel, Ecuyer des voyages*

de S.A.S. le duc de Saxe-Cobourg, etc. These cards with the name printed alongside the title are so unusual that they cause the greatest astonishment long before people have seen his light-green coat, his embroidered Turkish waistcoat and his apricot-coloured breeches. Enough of this Baron von Thümmel ! He has filled four sides and that is as much as he can reasonably expect from me. Yesterday morning I took great pleasure in warning him of the malice of people over here, but it was very hard to convince him.

You will by this time have received, after some difficulty, a baby's bonnet made by Charlotte's own fair hands, the like of which our fingers could never have achieved, and which you will be able with your own little puds, to render suitable for a boy, a girl or a hermaphrodite, whichever it may be ! With regard to the Wuchtel (*Victoria, Princess of Leiningen, Leopold's sister and future Duchess of Kent and mother of Queen Victoria*), I am very pleased with her ; everything she said to me in her last letter was most reasonable. I fear, however, that no marriage will take place this year, and for my part I am not much in favour of temporising, but in an affair of this sort a move at the wrong time would ruin everything. Poor Vicky is very afraid that she will be somewhat ridiculed over here, but the poor little thing will have some difficulty in avoiding this sort of annoyance, for here everyone is caricatured and even the most popular figures, about whom neither party has anything to say are forced to submit. Of us, notwithstanding our very retired existence, there exist at least thirty different cartoons ; it is unpleasant, but one gets used to it, and it now leaves me quite indifferent.

However the impertunity of Baron von Thümmel and the pictorial ingenuities of Rowlandson and Gillray were not the only

trials that Leopold was called upon to endure. No sooner was he safely married to Charlotte than he found himself straightway involved in the family squabbles of his in-laws. Never perhaps has the Royal Family consisted of so many mutually antagonistic individuals, with the capacity for carrying on private feuds with the greatest enthusiasm and persistence so exceptionally well developed. Unluckily they were all quite incapable of tempering their animosity with discretion and so the Hanoverian dirty linen was invariably washed with the maximum publicity. Of the various quarrels the most important was naturally that between the Regent and his wife, but with it were bound up numerous other minor feuds. Thus the Dukes of Sussex and Kent were convinced Whigs and were therefore naturally opposed to their brother, whose dislike the former of them considerably increased by his support of Caroline. The latter had an additional private quarrel of his own with the Duke of York over some rather shady military transactions which though at this time of considerable antiquity had never been properly healed. The Duke of Cumberland, an extreme Tory, had at one time or other, bitterly offended all his family save the Regent, and was now in the middle of a furious quarrel with his mother, Queen Charlotte, who for some inexplicable reason refused to receive his wife. Moreover, this prince entertained a peculiarly intense dislike of the Coburgs. The Duke of Clarence hated the Duchess of York, and it was with the amiable idea of annoying this excellent woman that he had encouraged the Prince Regent to marry her bitter enemy Caroline of Brunswick, whom subsequently he had come to detest even more than his other sister-in-law. The Princess Charlotte herself had, from earliest childhood, been intimately involved in these never-ending disputes and inherited qualities from both her parents which rendered it quite impossible for her to avoid the dangers of furious partisanship. She cordially disliked her father, was affectionately tolerant but also slightly contemptuous of her

mother, and long periods spent in her grandmother's company had not increased her respect or liking for the Queen. In such a milieu Leopold had need of all his natural reserves of tact and diplomacy and it is not surprising that a slight atmosphere of strain is apparent even thus early in his married life.

Now for the personal question which you ask me, whether I have become cold and more serious. Serious and thoughtful I am very frequently, sometimes colder but not especially so. The reasons for this are very enlightening ; my position politically is endlessly difficult, and in order to emerge unscathed and as far as possible unsullied, I am forced to watch every step. Here nothing is considered insignificant, and owing to a publicity which makes it quite impossible to keep any kind of secret one must carefully consider the slightest move before making it. You people on the continent can have no conception of English life where publicity is mixed up in everything and all is dominated by the party spirit. No noble or upper-class family can do anything which is of the remotest interest without its being known and straightway published in the newspapers with comments favourable or otherwise. Consider how much worse is the position of people situated as we are who excite the interest of the whole nation ? I am in the middle of all these people and, what was hardest of all at first, of a family whose members hate one another with an inconceivable bitterness. In trying to reconcile so many different points of view and interests and at the same time to do what is right and escape scandal—‘ il y a de quoi etre un peu pensif ’ I can assure you ! Then the world insists that I should produce harmony and I am actually exclusively interested in my beloved wife. I am reserved through dislike of being called indiscreet, for nothing is more detrimental to

these great affairs and their principals than indiscretion, and here everyone is quoted, and I do not wish my words to be repeated everywhere, for it causes much misunderstanding and as I have several cousins and uncles who are notorious in this respect, it makes me all the more careful. I could write you pages and pages on this subject which would give you great pleasure to read, but I have not the time for it—moreover my wife is grumbling and cannot understand how I can write so long a letter.

I have not much more news to give you. My beloved mouse, God keep her, is in tolerable health and will, I hope continue to improve. The weather is very fine. We have seen few strangers for some time ; at the end of the week there arrives a packetful. Everything was arranged that we should have a very beautiful and expensive house in London, that which belonged to the celebrated Duke of Marlborough, but difficulties have again arisen, caused more than likely, by certain Exalted Persons who do not wish us to have it although they have no use for it themselves. A thousand good wishes to the honest Menzel (*his brother-in-law, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly*) with whom, as I sincerely hope, things will soon go all right again. Many good wishes from my little wife who is sprawling rather than sitting on a sofa close by me, and who is now making a rude face—do you believe that ? Should she not rather make a loving one for her beloved sposo ?

Adieu, ever your faithful

BROTHER LEOPOLD.

CLAREMONT, 19th March 1817.

However, these family trials and tribulations did not interfere too drastically with the amenities of life at Claremont, and Leopold found time to direct his attention to the problems of agriculture.

His attitude is characteristically business-like, and one imagines that the home farm at Claremont had little in common with the elegant cow-sheds at the Trianon. With Leopold all things, even his hobbies, were conducted on strict business lines.

Meine ganz gute alte !

It is uncommonly gracious of me to be writing to you again, but this letter will, I trust, shorten all the following conjectures for I suppose, and not without cause, that you are now too busy to be able to read my letters, and therefore I will muzzle myself and curb my rhetorical and literary enthusiasm. I am at the moment as uncommonly melancholy over my hay and the possibility of rain, as I and Menzel were over the last shoot at Rosenau when the Serene Highness so arranged it that we had nothing to shoot, for here it rained on St. Swythyn's day and will therefore continue to do so for forty days : if it actually does rain as long as that then all my hay will be ruined. And it is the best hay that ever was seen, so sweet that I am convinced you could feed on it. The farmer, in accordance with his Bœoatian views, did not wish to cut it during the fine weather, and when at last he began to do so it started to rain, and it continues to rain and naturally it rains on my hay, as so sharp-witted a little Princess Know-all as my beloved sister will readily understand. But joking apart it is a great shame for if we rake it, it is worth after deducting all expenses at least £600 sterling which it is not exactly pleasant to be forced to pay out.

From the subject of hay I return to my liebe alte. You wished to have a night-cap of my wife's workmanship for the little arrival next August. With such matters we cannot concern ourselves, so buy yourself in Paris a good collection of caps and stockings, etc. I propose, my dear, to place a

small sum at your disposal with which you can purchase a certain amount of the necessary garments yourself, although I am a trifle anxious lest you should go and drink it away 'in the three drams, Rum, Brandy and Holland' as is described in a story in a certain book of yours ! I have credited the sum of thirty pounds to your account with Herr N. M. Rothschild.

The Coburgs had, apparently, a vast fund of family jokes of which the rather ponderous example above is one. The book referred to is a romance written by the Countess Mensdorff.

The health of my beloved wife, God keep her, is very good and I only trust that it may continue to be so. Thank God, we have had no one here this week. Next week we have, God save us, a dinner-party for the Regent, which a merciful heaven would never allow to take place. The Queen asked us to a fête-champêtre to-day at Frogmore near Windsor, but regretted that she would not be able to put us up for the night. As it is sixteen miles there and back we *thanked* her ! . . .

Chiaromonte is looking very fine and we enjoyed ourselves very much wandering about there. On Saturday and Sunday we have quite a few people coming ; they are, the Dowager Lady Warrick (*sic*) and her four daughters, excuse du peu, Sir Chlg Greville, Lady Ashbrooke, Capt. Scott, a distinguished naval officer, Lady Hawarden, and my dear old friend Dr. Flemming, a famous botanist, who was for forty years in India. On Sunday the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort, Esterhazy, the Marquis and Lady Abercorn, the Archbishop of York, Earl Westmoreland, Lady Privy Seal, Earl and Countess Bathurst, and Mons de Pfeffel, the Bavarian Minister. Now I must hastily close. Charlotte sends many good wishes, and I beg you to remember me to the family

for whom I ask God's blessing. All my love to my dear Menzel.

Your faithful brother LEOPOLD.

CLAREMONT, 17 July, 1817.

Leopold's next letter is largely concerned with his own family's affairs ; his elder brother is about to be married, and so completely do Leopold's sentiments overcome him on this happy occasion that his metaphors become finely mixed. It is sad to have to point out that the rosy prospects which this marriage suggested to the writer were never realised, for despite the fact that it was blest by the arrival of the future Prince Consort the union was far from successful. However, for the moment all was well and under the influence of these happy family rejoicings Leopold indulges in numerous little private jokes and even ventures a complicated, but rather obscure, Anglo-German pun.

Meine liebe alte !

I have written a long letter to Mama and so have little time or need to write to you. But as you are so honest and have so often written to me, I will send you, too, a letter on this happy nuptial day on which our beloved elder brother enters Hymen's realm, and lays the foundation stone of a new and flourishing stem of our incomparable family. I learn with the liveliest interest from your last letter that your health is so tolerable despite the fact you live entirely on sour milk and pork, poor wretch ! Only beware of the ' Three drams, the Holland, the Brandy and the Rum,' lest they should prejudice your struggle for health. That our dear Menzelio is also pleased to be back at Holzkirchen again gives me great pleasure. I have not for a long time heard anything either from Schmid or from Wessenberg.

That the carriage has travelled round so unnecessarily is

most annoying, and I am furious with the stem of Judah and have written to Herr Rothschild, who has known for over two months that the carriage (which moreover had the address written on it in large letters) was intended for Wessenberg, that those people who were responsible for the confusion, despite the fact that it had all been explained to them, will have to be gracious enough to bear the cost. Baron Amschel Rothschild in Frankfurt will also be free to do so ! If the good people had taken the trouble to look at the coat of arms etc. on the carriage they would have noticed that the supporters were large dogs, and however it is or may be with the family 'with their going to the dogs' they have not yet appeared on the coat of arms !

As to Charlotte's health I refer you to my letter to Mama. She was very tired by all the distinguished people who were here, now however, God bless her, all goes well. . . .

The things which came by the Hanoverian courier arrived rather damp with the exception of Mama's portrait which is in an excellent state of preservation. We now wish very much to possess your portrait and with a little 'connaissance de cause' I beg that you will be so kind as to allow the one with the orange 'Moldave' which belongs to Mama, to be copied as it is one of the best. As Charlotte wished to hear some details about you I gave her some, and explained that what was chiefly remarkable was that you were forced to shave every Saturday evening as you had a thick black beard which had frequently caused you to be taken for their Colonel by the Uhlans !—The Hanoverian courier comes here again in September. Charlotte very much wants to have your portrait the same size as Mama's so that it can hang as a pendant. . . .

Now adieu, my love to my faithful Menzelio who will

indeed answer this letter as soon as it arrives. . . . My best blessings on you in which my wife also joins.

Your ever faithful brother

LEOPOLD.

CLAREMONT, 31st July, 1817.

Another member of the Coburg clan of whom mention is now made is Juli, Leopold's sister, who was married to the Grand Duke Constantine, the brother of Tsar Alexander and Tsar Nicholas, a prince who seems to have inherited several of the more unpleasant eccentricities of his father, the lamented Tsar Paul. The marriage had been dissolved and the Duke of Coburg now had his sister back on his hands again. This Princess is remarkable in history for a curious mistake in which she was once involved. Some years later at the time of the Decembrist Revolt in Russia, large numbers of the peasantry were induced to support the revolutionaries in their demand for a constitution, owing to the fact that they were under the impression that this word was the feminine of Constantine, to which in Russian it is very similar, and so they imagined they were espousing the cause of this Princess, whose treatment at the hands of her husband had won her considerable sympathy.

The identity of the 'upright but unattractive book-keeper' can only be guessed at; possibly he is merely a personification of those virtues which the Grand Duchess appears to have lacked, but with which, according to Leopold, she would be forced to come to some compromise.

Meine liebe Alte !

I must thank you for your letter as well as for the copy which you allowed Malchen to make. I have sent her, through the Hanoverian courier, a little silk flag and another one for my beloved Pinchen. I beg you to accompany these gifts with a few friendly words and tell them that as they were

not able to carry them at the wedding they may be allowed to do so at the christening. . . . I have recently written to Wessenberg where the carriage will by now at last have arrived. . . .

Charlotte, thank God, continues to keep well. There is not much news—save a few business matters about which the Regent, who may never write, still owes me an answer. Up till now it has been raining in the most unheard of fashion—although I have not transgressed, but only come near to doing so ! If we should have no good harvest weather it will be an inconceivable misfortune, and moreover exceedingly dangerous because here the shortage will be manipulated for political reasons. I have already written to Mama on this subject so here I can only repeat myself.

I hear that Juli goes to Coburg. Which has doubtless caused a revolution there ! I fear that our Russian friend's hatred for the upright but unattractive book-keeper has caused a 'Blow up' ! It is a great pity that Juli's finances are so important for her existence for who will make themselves responsible for them ? Charlotte joins with me in hoping very soon to have good news from you [*The Countess Mensdorff had been ill*]. Greet Mama on our behalf and the whole family, particularly the little bride. My love to Menzel who has a long letter of mine to answer.

I remain your ever devoted friend

LEOPOLD.

CLAREMONT, 28th Aug., 1817.

The following letter, in the light of subsequent events, has a remarkable and melancholy interest. Throughout the correspondence there has been frequent mention of Charlotte's health from which we may conclude that there had already been some slight cause for anxiety. Now her time has come and the house

is filled with doctors in whom Leopold puts a great and unjustified faith. The chief of these was Sir Richard Croft, a self-opinionated and obstinate medical bigwig, whose affability was small compensation for his dictatorial methods and constant refusal ever to consult with his colleagues. Although Sir Richard was the principal medico, the most interesting was Stockmar who now makes his first appearance on the English stage where afterwards he was to wield so considerable an influence. He had been Leopold's doctor on active service and having accompanied him to England had quickly won the hearts both of his master and of Charlotte. He had already hinted to Sir Richard that he feared all was not well with his patient but had only been snubbed for his pains.

However, not all this extremely interesting letter is concerned with gynæcological matters. Mention is made of another sister of Leopold, Antoinette, who had married Duke Alexander of Würtemberg, at that time in the Russian service. The Grand Duke Nicholas referred to here was afterwards Tsar Nicholas I.

The Lieven was the celebrated wife of the Russian Prince of that name who was at this time the Russian Ambassador in London. She was a born intriguer, and achieved the remarkable feat of being mistress of two such prominent and widely different statesmen as Metternich and Guizot.

Victoria is of course Leopold's widowed sister, the Princess of Leiningen, afterwards Duchess of Kent and mother of Queen Victoria.

Meine liebe Alte !

It is already past the time for me to write once more to my beloved friend and sister, but up till now I have never had an opportunity to do so, for an intimate correspondence takes up so much time. Among other things there has been

a short but stormy epistolary skirmish with the Bishops on the subject of Vicky's baptism. We have very much regretted your beloved letters and Charlotte, who was always very impatient to read them, frequently complains that they no longer arrive.

You must not expect a very cheerful letter, although I always feel inclined to write one, having a natural fondness for harmless malice, but at a moment when one is awaiting the outcome of an event which provokes, not merely thought, but also anxiety, one finds it impossible to achieve. Charlotte, God guard her a thousandfold is still quite well although she has had a little pain from time to time, but this has only occurred occasionally and her nights have mostly been peaceful. She continues her normal way of life and goes out into the fresh air as often as the weather permits. Her time began on the 19th, and we had hoped that all would be over by the end of month. And now we are in November 'comme si de rien en etait.' Old Croft says that the fruit will fall the more lightly from the tree if it is quite ripe. So we hope that God will so allow it. . . . Everything encourages us to count on a happy outcome, and the above-mentioned Sir Richard says that it would be impossible to wish for anything to be in the smallest degree different from what it is. This doctor, in whom Charlotte has a great and well-placed confidence, is a dear, good man and always cheerful and full of jokes : but he regards every aspect of this matter of creation from a purely quantitative standpoint, and it is his earnest intention to convert all those who hitherto have not been of this way of thinking to his own productive point of view. For example he will start with a *very nice* cur for Lady John Thynne, a nice little woman, also quite *wood-looking*, but 17 years and three months older, and married for 16 years without children, which will

convert her to these ideas. She has once already suffered considerable embarrassment on this account. Moreover he never sees her flirting—she is an adorable little spaniel, but childless, alas, and denied satisfaction—without saying ‘If we do not pull that little bitch and make her live lower she never will have any puppies.’ I never take him shooting with me without his calling all the dogs bitches, although one is called Robber, another Crack and the third Simro, but this however makes no difference ; he says ‘They are very clever bitches.’ With all this he is very skilful in his own line and will moreover communicate his opinion with regard to you. Stocki has given him a report of your illness without informing him of the treatment or his own opinion. We have the house full of doctors ; Croft is very tall and goes by the name of the long Doctor. A very respectable, reverend, gentleman who was once the tutor of the plump, naughty little Charlotte, is fat and with the name of Short, he is the short doctor, then comes Stocki who is the little doctor ; funnily enough they follow each other in point of size like organ pipes. Hardenbruck is not very well and in a frightful temper over everything. It is really a great pity that so honest and upright, and also so pleasant, a man has such a trouble which must cause such very unpleasant moments. I do everything to make him comfortable here : he has a good income, everything free, rides my horses, can go wherever he pleases, has always been treated by me with friendliness and consideration and then he still finds it possible to discover for himself *sujets de mauvaise humeur*. Mistress Campbell (*the midwife*) is paler, thinner and more sickly than ever and in a continual state of worry ; at night she sits up in bed listening for any noise in the house. She has complained of her trouble to the long doctor and that she has been unable to close an eye ; he has given her the

advice that if she cares to tie her night cap up tight over her ears and hear nothing, then she will be left in peace. This she has taken extremely badly ! . Charlotte has seen no visitors here for some time. 'The Lieven,' who has come back from Paris, seems to have been somewhat put out by this. Our weather is so so. The last few days have not been unpleasant, but before it has been endlessly wet. Grandmamma (Queen Charlotte) goes to-morrow to Bath for the birthday of her youngest and sickly, daughter, and for the anniversary of the death of another who died some years ago, but she is too delicate to embarrass herself with such trifles. From the family I do not hear very frequently, from Antoinette nothing for over six months. And then she only wrote to say that the Tsar was an angel, whom I, in her position should thank for his many kindnesses to her, and as Marie is so charming it is really very hard that an Imperial Throne will not quickly be raised somewhere, for her to put the child on ! Grand Duke Nicholas also writes her praises, and says that she is on very friendly terms with his young wife. But I am rather afraid that the little Marie will not eventually marry a king and will therefore be unhappy for the rest of her life. . . .

From Juliette I have heard nothing further for a long time, of which subject there would be far too much to say now.

I have forgotten to write to you to say that I found the Holzkirchener wine very good and pleasant and consider it a very good policy to encourage this industry ; I will also buy some. Wessenberg was delighted over the carriage that has at last arrived, and which is really very beautiful. Make my apologies to Mama for I cannot write to her, and we are grumbling, possibly without reason, that we have been so long a time without a letter. All my love to Menzel.

Charlotte sends you her love and hopes that meine alte will get better and better.

Your very devoted brother

LEOPOLD.

CLAREMONT, 2nd November, 1817.

Seven weeks later comes the last, tragic letter. The Princess Charlotte had given birth to a still-born son late on the 5th of November ; at first her condition had given rise to no alarm, and although disappointed that her child was dead, she remained cheerful, and Leopold retired to his room to snatch a few hours' sleep. He was awakened some time later by Stockmar with the news that Charlotte was dead. In the interval she had suddenly been seized with pain and despite all the frantic efforts of Croft, who had refused to allow any of the other doctors in her room during the confinement and whose self-complacency was now finally shattered, she expired before Leopold could be roused. The shock of this quite unexpected calamity was generally overwhelming. The Princess had been enormously popular and she was now mourned by those who had hoped to be her subjects, with a sincerity and abandon quite unparalleled. The Regent collapsed and gave way to torrents of weeping, not, one hopes unmingled with self-reproach ; old Queen Charlotte was prostrated by the news, while the lamentable Croft blew out his brains a few months later. Of the disastrous effect on Leopold this letter is an eloquent testimony ; that it was lasting as well as overwhelming is proved by the following extract from a letter written nearly thirty years later to Queen Victoria.

My gift is Charlotte's portrait. The face is extremely like, and the likest that exists ; the hair is a little too fair, it had become also darker. I take this opportunity to repeat that Charlotte was a noble-minded and highly gifted creature. She was nervous, as all the family have been ; she could be

violent, but then she was full of repentance for it, and her disposition *highly generous* and *susceptible of great devotion*. . . .

Her understanding was extremely good ; she knew everybody, and I even afterwards found her judgment generally extremely correct. *She had read a great deal and knew well what she had read*. Generous she was almost *too much*, and her *devotion* was quite affecting, from a character so much pushed to be selfish and imperious.

I will here end my souvenir of poor dear Charlotte, but I thought that the subject could not but be interesting to you. Her constancy in wishing to marry me, which she maintained under difficulties of every description, has been the foundation of all that touched the family afterwards. You know, I believe, that your poor father was the chief promoter, though also the Yorks were ; but our correspondence from 1814 till 1816 was entirely carried on through his kind intervention ; it would otherwise have been impossible, as she was really treated as a sort of prisoner. Grant always to that good and generous Charlotte, who sleeps already with her beautiful little boy so long, where all will go to, an affectionate remembrance, and believe me she deserves it.

It is not perhaps too fanciful to suppose that Leopold's deep affection for, and interest in, Victoria was partially based on the resemblance which her situation bore to that of the cousin whose death had elevated her to the throne. At Osborne and Balmoral Leopold observed the realisation of so much that he had planned at Claremont ; the fulfilment of those dreams which for him the malignancy of fate and the incompetence of Harley Street had shattered for ever.

As the nineteenth century wears on, we watch the figure of Leopold growing ever more important and impressive and steadily less human. But behind that imposing façade of king and diplomat

we are always conscious of something lacking ; something that had perished with Charlotte and lay buried with her in the vaults of Windsor. When finally the bewigged and painted old gentleman, the founder of modern Belgium and the father-in-law, uncle, cousin of half the crowned heads in Europe was gathered to his fathers it was discovered that in his will he had left instructions that he was to be buried, not beside his Bourbon princess in the land for which he had done so much, but beside poor little Charlotte among the tombs of all those quarrelling relations he had once so much disliked. As the funeral cortège wound its way through the mourning streets of Brussels among those who followed the royal catafalque was the youthful Duke of Connaught, the last surviving link between our modern world and the royal tragedy recorded in these letters.

Liebe alte !

A thousand thanks for your letter of the 6 December, write to me as often as your health permits, *your letters do me good*, and frequently release my pent up grief in tears. . . . You were the delight of my dead angel, nothing interested and amused her more than to be allowed the precedence with you, and she then broke open the parcel from Rothschild with that enthusiasm which she always displayed over everything which she liked, in order to give me your letters. I cannot tell you how we used to look forward to the arrival of the courier from Hanover, which was always an occasion for rejoicing with her, just like children over the Christ Child. Yes, meine liebe alte, had one only God's leave to cast off this life and to be joined with her once more !—

Patience, patience though the heart breaks
 And God in Heaven heedeth not
 (Geduld, Geduld, wenns Herz auch bricht
 Mit Gott im Himmel hadere nicht.)

What mortal has lost so much true happiness : I had now once and for all become *accustomed to domestic happiness*, I so dearly wanted children and lived so entirely for that which would make us both truly happy, not for the pomp which our position and importance gave us. As it was I thanked God when Strangers, even though they were good friends, left our Paradise after a visit as I wished to be quiet and happy with the Mouse *and nothing else* ! What a feeling of love and tranquillity and happiness filled my breast when in the evening we came back home, and she slept with her head gently resting on my heart, and I said to myself : Your strong arm now holds *your All*, your delight and your treasure !—Charlotte was a very beautiful woman and possessed in a high degree that which the English call ‘Countenance,’ but, I assure you, and in my present state I am less capable than ever of saying anything which I do not really feel, that although her appearance was truly lovely and charming, it was my little Mouse’s noble heart and personality that I loved and daily grew to love more and more. This was the guarantee of my faith which the terrors neither of age nor of sickness could shake. And what could split the union of our souls—nothing, unless it were possible for life so to seduce me and make me unworthy of being joined with her again at last, who was so fit for heaven. I venture to hope that this will be unlikely, for I have had experience of happiness and attained it in the highest degree possible to man, and I ask my conscience which tells me that I have sworn in gratitude to God to glorify his renown through the lustre of virtue from the Throne, and that my heart was only concerned with the welfare of my angel, in which I can find little that is blameworthy. Who has endured good fortune can also bear the iron hand of boundless misfortune, if he has once reconciled himself to

the Will of the Inconceivable ; and virtue is the only road to the dearly longed-for world beyond. Ah, were I already there !—My health is tolerable, although to my great joy I am pale, thinner and feebler, were it otherwise I should consider it a reproach. For you and yours, whatever Heaven may decree, I shall always to the best of my ability, provide. When I made the sad journey to Windsor and secretly flattered myself with the belief that I should not survive it, I then insured the welfare of you and your affairs, as well as my depressed condition allowed by a last final arrangement, and I would not have been happy if had not, although with some difficulty, thus accomplished it.—So long as this heart beats it will never cease to care for the welfare of those who are dear to it, and finally at the wished-for end, death will ratify what was promised in life.

Live, liebe alte, for the True and inexpressibly Good, the best of life's companions, virtue and true love which do not change and grow old, live for your beloved children ! You, my dear, still have the bonds of love to bind and to continue binding you to life. I have lost my all, the lovely, noble wife, the beautiful little boy they wait for me in cool places.

Adieu, liebe alte, you see I am already a little better, kiss our dear friend in my name. It will be a great pleasure to me to see you again next year.

Your poor friend LEOPOLD.

All my love to Mama and be so kind as to greet the little sister-in-law in my name on her birthday.

BIRDS IN SPRING.

BY J. M. CRASTER.

FEW people will disagree with the statement that the most interesting times of year for the study of bird life are spring and autumn. Mainly so because these are the periods when migration is at its height, but also owing to the delightful conditions of weather and of scenery which are so often vouchsafed to country dwellers during these two seasons.

As regards the actual migrations, these consist in spring of those species which have wintered in warmer climates, such as Spain and Africa, and are now returning to the north to breed. Some members of this great and varied company find all they require in the shape of food supply and nesting sites in these islands, whilst others are not so easily satisfied and proceed much farther north; some, indeed, will submit to no other conditions than those to be found in the Arctic Circle itself.

The spring migrants consist principally of song-birds, and include that very musical and delightful class known as the 'warblers.'

Entirely different are those birds which make up the bulk of the 'back-end' migrants. Here again, some—and a very small minority at that—stay with us for the winter, while the vast majority have yet many hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of miles to cover before they find conditions suitable for all the winter months.

The autumn migrants, numbering in their multitude the two great clans of wild fowl and 'waders,' are very attractive by reason of their musical and varied call-notes, and also

for their really remarkable powers of flight ; but, taken as a whole, song have they none.

When we turn to the summer migrants, however, we find avian music at its best and most varied.

It is true that certain of our native singers, such as song-thrush, blackbird and skylark, do include many extremely beautiful notes in their repertoire, and that they undoubtedly do seem wonderfully sweet to us in the early spring months, when our ears are, as it were, empty of all save the call-notes, sometimes rather sad and dreary, of the winter visitors. But these hard-working and persistent outpourers of music fade into insignificance when we hear the first blackcap or nightingale.

This seems rather unfair to our native species who, after all, can do no more than give us of their best ; and that, very often, when the weather conditions by no means conduce to the production of high-class music. But still, human nature being what it is, are we not rather inclined to wish the mistle-thrush would 'shut up' when the first willow-wren showers down his delicate warble from the graceful branches of the greening larches, quite forgetting how delightful sounded the stormcock's first challenge to the snow-storm one bitter day in January ? Similarly, welcome as are the combined efforts of blackbird and song-thrush when spring is really in the air, in late March or early April, how terribly familiar and almost plebeian they both seem when coming into competition with garden-warbler or wood-wren.

A similar state of affairs often exists when we analyse our thoughts with regard to trees. How soothing and delicious is the sound of a winter wind amongst the branches of some old Scots Pine upon the moors, and yet how we are apt to turn almost contemptuously away from the same tree

in early summer and utter the most fulsome praises of the larch standing beside it in all the glory of green needles and tiny crimson flowers. How comforting it was to find shelter and warmth in the 'ride' of a Norway Spruce plantation in mid-winter, but how dull are these same spruces beside the delicate green of Silver Birch.

To the average bird lover, therefore, as distinct from what one might term the specialist—whether game-shooter or wild-fowler—the arrival of the summer migrants will be more eagerly looked forward to than will that of their opposite numbers in the autumn. While to those who appreciate birds most from the point of view of their voices, the autumn call-notes, beautiful and appropriate as these often are, will not bear comparison with the lovely outpourings of many warblers in the full ecstasy of their nuptial ardour.

When writing under such a heading, however, as 'birds in spring,' one must assuredly never think of leaving out of account the songs, behaviour and habits of our native species. First, because to do so would be to tell little more than half the story; and secondly, because quite often in this climate the arrival of the main bulk of summer visitors is delayed so much that, were it not for the voices of the resident songsters, hardly a sound would be heard in field or woodland until the spring is nearly finished.

Then again, from another point of view, there are springs and springs. There is the one put down in black and white on the calendar, and there is, or may be, quite a different one when weather is employed as the distinction between winter and spring, or between spring and summer.

Spring sometimes arrives suddenly, and very prematurely, in late February or early March: very welcome, it is true, but at the same time bringing with it an unpleasant question

at the back of one's mind of 'How soon are we going to suffer for this?' For it is very seldom that the clerk of the weather will let us off altogether, and forget to inflict upon us that set-back which is doubtless so salutary in its effect upon our optimism!

Taking these various factors into consideration, it is probably fairly accurate to think of the subject 'birds in spring' as beginning with the first lusty whistle of the storm-cock from the top of a leafless elm, when the outside temperature still feels 'mid-wintery,' to the appearance of the last summer migrant when all Nature is clothed in her green and shady finery.

Working to this rough plan, one comes to the conclusion that the time of spring, so far as birds are concerned, is a period of music and of battle. True, most of the battles are certainly insufficient in vigour and 'un-gory' enough in result to flutter the dovecotes of Geneva, but that need not be taken into consideration. All is fair in love and war: and since these battles are undoubtedly fought 'all for the love of a lady,' surely it matters not whether or no the stretcher party is required, so long as one bird finds himself the victor, and is rewarded for his valour by being permitted—truly in this case—to bill and coo with his selected fair one!

Not all songs either lead up to, or are the conclusion of, battles. Some obviously are merely an expression of the singer's delight with the weather, the food supply, his own feeling of well-being, or possibly a combination of all three. This may be the cause, but the effect, upon the human audience, is usually—unless we are so absolutely steeped in our own troubles and sorrows as to be oblivious to the music—that of a quick cheering up of the senses; a broad hint that the hard times of winter are drawing to a close, and that it

behoves us to take a leaf out of the singer's book and to look gladly forward to better times in the future.

Let us accept this good advice thankfully and act upon it.

Beginning, then, with the earlier and commoner avian spring music, one finds that by no means all of it is produced by so-called song-birds. The song-birds proper are given able assistance by such instrumentalists as the cushat (wood pigeon), stock dove, curlew, redshank, and last, but most assuredly not least, the peewit. None of these birds can be said to sing in the strict sense of the word, but whether the sound they produce is described as a call-note, or merely as conversation, spring in England would certainly not be spring without it.

The cooing of the cushat, although by some considered monotonous by reason of the uniformity of the number of syllables contained in each phrase, yet appears to vary greatly, to the discerning, according to the conditions. When first heard in late winter or early spring it sounds loud, confident and challenging ; during pleasant and showery April weather the general effect is as of thankfulness and pleasure that spring is truly here at last ; while upon a really hot summer day, when the cooer is hidden in the dense foliage of some woodland tree, the coo is so subdued and languid as to suggest that the utterer finds it almost too much of an effort to produce the sound at all, and only does so from a firm sense of duty.

Another delightful attribute of the cushat, though beginning later in the year than does the cooing period, is the graceful but noisy 'clapping' flight ; when the bird alternately climbs and drops, accompanying the former movement by a succession of loud reports, a joy flight *par excellence*.

The cooing of the stock dove is even more monotonous than is that just described, as it consists of two syllables only,

constantly and rapidly repeated, but the spring flight is quite different. The little dove glides round in wide circles with its wings raised high on each side, and rocks very slightly from side to side as it does so.

Those three well-known residents, the curlew, redshank and peewit, all have their spring call accompanied by its equally attractive spring flight. But whereas the two last-named never (although that is a very risky word to use with reference to any bird !) make use of either call or flight except in the breeding season, the first individual may be heard giving vent to the lovely bubbling whistle any time during the winter ; but it is only when keyed up to a sufficient pitch of amatory ecstasy that the call and flight are combined and the full performance given.

As showing that there are some curlews which breed here and winter far to the southward, while others winter with us and produce their young much nearer to the Arctic Circle, it may be mentioned that one may come upon flocks of the latter still upon the shore while the former have already paired and are entertaining us with their spring call and flight in the rough grass fields.

The love-trill of the redshank, a repetition of the word 'tooli' or 'toolee,' is accompanied by a flight similar to that of the sandpiper upon the banks of the hill burn, in which the wings are held always well below the horizontal, and are then made to tremble rather than to flap, as the redshank glides gradually nearer to the ground.

The well-known spring call of the peewit is about as indescribable as any bird music can be, but seems to embody the very spirit of joyful springtime. The bird rises from the ploughed or grass field with slow and ponderous, almost owl-like, flaps ; gradually accelerates, and then flings itself about in the air with complete and utter abandon, while

the broad pinions 'thrum' with a sound as of wind in tightly stretched wires. Suddenly the call comes crashing forth, and then the bird lands gently, folds the wings, and stands motionless.

So much for the more or less really musical members among the long list of resident birds. There are, however, others which, though by no means worthy of inclusion when one is dealing solely with the subject of spring calls—and far less so under the heading of song-birds—yet merit attention on account of the pleasure their voices give to many people. In this category must be placed the rook and jackdaw, and any other species which may bring joy to various individuals because, by an association of ideas, their voices recall happy memories of one kind or another.

It is true that neither rook nor jackdaw are more vocally inclined in the spring than they are at any other period of the year, yet at this season there does appear to be something more of the spirit of glad springtime—a sort of speaking *joie de vivre*—in their calls than is noticeable during the remaining months. The larger bird seems to be expressing his excitement and enthusiasm at the thoughts of nest building, bringing up the family, and then teaching that family all that it must know when reaching the years of discretion; while the smaller grey-headed cousin produces his loud and cheerful 'jack' with such glad emphasis that the listener feels instinctively that the bird is really welcoming the warmer air, the bursting of buds, and in fact all the accompaniments which make this season so looked forward to by human beings themselves.

Having now dealt briefly with two classes of birds, those whose calls appear to reflect the spirit of spring, and those which have special spring calls of their own, it is time to turn to some at least of the real song-birds which supply

(at least) half the attraction of the country-side from January to March ; and which would do so until June, were it not for the fact that the arrival of the migrant musicians is apt to make us distinctly blasé towards their resident rivals.

First and foremost, if only on the score of volume of sound, must come the mistle-thrush. This bird has many traits in its character which must commend it favourably to our notice : the complete contempt it evinces for any efforts the weather may make to drown its song, the great pluck shown in the defence of nest and young, and the wonderful tone of the loud whistle. This whistle does, it is true, seem rather overdone when challenged by the first flute-notes of the blackbird, but it is surely better to agree that, at any rate in this case, comparisons are odious, and in the meantime to appreciate the glad and challenging fore-runner of spring, coming when winter is by no means yet on the retreat :

The blackbird needs no further particular mention other than to state that, with the exception of the single-note-crescendo of the nightingale and the rather similar performance of the wood-wren, its whistle is probably the clearest and most sweetly toned of all similar bird music.

Possibly more people know the song of the thrush than that of any other bird, and almost always because of its habit of repeating one or more phrases *ad infinitum*. Such remarks as 'pretty Dick' and 'did you do it?' appear to constitute at least 50 per cent. of those thoughts which the song-thrush wishes to put into words !

Incidentally, apart from the robin and wren, which are well known to be more or less all-the-year-round songsters, the thrush is more often heard during the autumn months than most other species, although at this season the full volume is lacking as compared with the spring song.

Another species, without whose music it would certainly be felt that some important element was lacking in an English spring, is the chaffinch.

The song cannot compare for beauty of note or length of utterance with several other species; none the less, here again there seems to be a sort of concentrated joy contained in the loud and cheerful rattle, which implies that the bird is really singing to express its appreciation of the return of spring, and by no means merely from a sense of duty.

While on the subject of the song of resident species, there is one item which must never be omitted. Although perhaps partaking more of the nature of a call-note than a song proper, yet the 'little-bit-of-bread-and-no-cheese' of the yellowhammer, constituting that bird's only musical effort, can surely be credited to its account as at least a song-substitute, if not a real song? Although the phrase is almost always of the same length, and contains the same number of syllables, yet individuals constantly vary the intonation of their remarks. The first five words are sung on the same note, and then follow four alternatives: (a) the 'no' up and the 'cheese' down, (b) vice versa, (c) the 'no' on the same note as the first five words, and the 'cheese' up, (d) similar with regard to the 'no' but with the 'cheese' down.

Although by no possibility can it be classed as a song, yet the call-note of the greenfinch—that long-drawn-out 'dweee'—partakes to some extent of the nature of the yellowhammer's song, in that it also varies in tune, but the variation is only twofold as compared with the fourfold one described above. Curiously enough, in the writer's experience, the majority of the greenfinches in Northumberland gradually raise their voices as the 'dwee' is produced, thus making it sound like a question; on the other hand, most of the south-country birds of the same species drop

the note towards the end of their 'dwee' and thus change the apparent meaning of the remark from a rather cheerful question to that of a more or less doleful statement.

The whole subject of the call-notes and songs of the many resident birds is a very extensive one, and might be stretched almost indefinitely, but any writer on this very attractive theme cannot avoid the impression that a voice is urgently whispering in his ear, 'When are you going to stop all that and begin discussing *us*?' ; and it needs no very keen detective work to recognise this voice as representing the combined outburst of the clan of the warblers. And when this broad hint has been taken, with all due humility, the next question is where to begin. Shall it be in order of arrival, in volume of song, or what?

Very possibly this question, if put to five or six bird enthusiasts, might provoke five or six different answers. This, although very puzzling to the man in the street, is yet an admirable result, as showing the very varied appeal which bird song makes to different natures, and therefore the distinct likelihood of a great widening in the already extensive number of bird lovers which would occur if the many delights of practical ornithology were put before the public as a whole.

There is no doubt that, beautiful and attractive as are the songs and call-notes of the resident birds, it is when one's ears are enchanted by the liquid and glorious outpourings of the warblers that one is made to realise to what a pitch of perfection bird music can reach.

A very useful fact relative to the voices of the many warblers is that in the majority of cases these are completely distinct one from another, and that the identification of their owners is thereby very much simplified ; a great help when it is remembered that most of the birds spend their time here

either amongst the thick leaves of full-foliaged trees, or else among the impervious tangle of hedge and copse—neither of which leads to clarity of vision, especially when the longest period of time that any warbler remains still can be better counted in seconds than in minutes !

Possibly as good a plan to adopt as any other is to take that group of three individuals first, consisting of the willow-wren, chiff-chaff and wood-wren, the trio which is sometimes known as the 'leaf warblers.' The first two are completely indistinguishable from each other by sight, but, fortunately, the songs are very different indeed ; in fact the utterance of the chiff-chaff can only be given the courtesy title of song, call-note being a more fitting and accurate description of the incessant repetition of the first syllable of its own name. On the other hand, the willow-wren fills the hedges and woodlands with a simple but deliciously melodious little song, the very epitome of the gentle breezes and balmy air of summer.

The wood-wren, distinctly rarer than the other two, has a song which is almost unique amongst bird music, and which Hudson describes as 'a long passionate trill—the woodland sound which is like no other.' In addition to this musical shiver the bird occasionally gives vent to a most beautiful full and almost nightingale-like note which literally compels one's notice.

Whether this group gets its name of leaf warblers by reason of the fact that the individuals are usually seen—or rather not seen—amongst the tree branches, or because of their greenish plumage, really does not matter ; but certainly both their habits and their colouring seem very appropriate to the still delicate shades of deciduous trees in the early summer.

Another group, though containing but two members,

comes next. Their songs are louder than those of the leaf warblers, and this group differs from the latter in that whereas the voices are the better method of identification in the case of the three above-named species, in the two about to be described individuals the plumage is a much better guide than are the songs. Sometimes indeed, and especially early in the season, even the expert has some difficulty in deciding whether the bird to which he is listening is a blackcap or a garden warbler. Usually the former makes the superior music, though in shorter snatches of song ; while the latter seems to be able to say more with one breath, and at the same time appears to be in much more of a hurry to get it said ! In fact on many occasions the effect which the song of the garden warbler has upon its hearer is similar to that of the feeding starling upon the observer—a distinct resemblance to a man trying to catch a train !

There is really nothing at all distinctive about the garden warbler so far as its plumage is concerned, and the blackcap has only that member which gives it its name to which attention need be drawn.

The mention of the hurry in which the garden warbler appears to be when uttering its song naturally leads one to think of that other warbler to whom speed also seems highly necessary—the whitethroat. This species has an additional claim to attention when pouring forth its lively music, and that is the characteristic aerial dance with which the song is almost always accompanied. The obviously excited little bird sits upon some prominent spray of thorn in a roadside hedge, looking very perky and important, and suddenly springs into the air to a height of some twenty or thirty feet, uttering, as it does so, a curious and confused medley of notes, some musical and others harsh. On reach-

ing the maximum altitude which the singer appears to consider necessary, it descends again by a succession of extremely erratic side-slips and other apparently aimless manœuvres, all the time continuing the song, the last note or two of which are often uttered as the bird vanishes into the tangle of the hedge. This, though not invariable, is a much commoner ending to the song and dance than it is to see the singer descend and perch upon the same, or a similar, spray of hedge vegetation which exposes him to the public gaze.

The last-named bird has a smaller cousin in the shape of the lesser whitethroat; the latter is not only considerably scarcer in most districts than is its larger relative, but is of such a secretive and skulking habit that it is even more rarely seen than is justified merely on the score of the small number which are available for observation.

Whether it is correct to say that the lesser whitethroat has two distinct songs, or only one song and a call-note, is a matter of opinion, but at any rate there are two separate utterances, both of which offer a ready means of identification. The first is a very subdued and more melodious edition of the song of the common whitethroat, while the latter—and the sound more often heard—is a quick succession of very full-toned notes resembling, at any rate to many people's ears, the 'little-bit-of-bread-and-no-cheese' of the yellowhammer, but omitting the last word.

As previously stated, the voice of the lesser whitethroat is much more often heard than the actual bird is seen, as both types of song usually come from some many-leaved tangle in which it is almost like searching for the proverbial needle in a bundle of hay to attempt to pick out the little eager, restless singer from its chosen thicket.

Two further species of warblers remain to be mentioned,

one of which is very, and the other moderately, common in Northumberland; the first being the sedge-warbler and the other the grasshopper-warbler.

The former is not the only bird the name of which is not always very descriptive of its habits. Sedge-warbler it may certainly be where these plants abound, but in most parts of the country it might just as well be any one of the following: willow-warbler, privet-warbler, larch-warbler (where these trees are still small), and, in fact, almost 'anything-warbler' so long as the anything affords the noisy little bird sufficient undergrowth in which to hide, and slightly elevated perches from which to utter its amazingly varied jumble of sounds, both sweet and the reverse.

Two favourite sites for this species are either where a wood has been felled and the resulting tangle of stool-shoots and undergrowth gives the required conditions, or some young plantation wherein the growing trees, preferably larch, are big enough to provide cover, but not yet sufficiently tall to exclude light and air.

In conditions such as these one or more pairs of sedge-warblers will continue singing all day and late into the night—for with the exception of the nightingale this is the latest singer we have among the migrants—filling the surrounding air with such an extraordinary medley of sounds as really defies description. Not only are the actual notes varied in the extreme, both sweet and harsh, but the turning of the singer's head gives an apparently wide range of volume, and the song ebbs and flows from piano to crescendo and back again, until the listener begins to wonder where the bird really is—four yards away or forty.

When actually seen, and this—though oftener than in the case of the lesser whitethroat—is not nearly as frequent as one could wish, the bird has one excellent mark of identifica-

tion, a pale stripe resembling an eyebrow, which shows up well in a good light.

The question of sedges apart, water seems by no means necessary to this species, though on the other hand the presence of a small pond or stream is in no way objected to ; but the loquacious musician is just as likely to be found at a distance of half a mile from a tiny trickle of water, as it is close to the bank of some considerable body of that liquid.

The grasshopper-warbler is really quite well-named, although some supersensitive ears find a greater resemblance between the bird's call and the note of a fisherman's reel, than they do between the former and the chirruping of a grasshopper. This is no doubt very interesting and instructive to those who endeavour upon all occasions to find something to criticise, but the effect which the sound has upon most people is one of amazement that the vocal chords of the avian singer are apparently capable of an absolutely unlimited quantity of music without taking breath. To one listening to the trill of the grasshopper-warbler for the first time the result usually is that, long before the conclusion of the performance, the human audience finds himself gasping for breath in sympathy with the complete vacuum which he feels sure must now fill the bird's lungs ! Were the clan of the warblers ever to found a pipe band in imitation of the Clans of the North, there is no doubt whatever which species would be chosen to get most volume of sound from the chanter and the drone !

There are, of course, other warblers in addition to those mentioned, but apart from the reed-warbler—which though common is at the same time very local—the others are to be classed more as ‘ to be hoped for ’ than as ‘ to be expected.’ Possibly some readers will be thinking—‘ what about the

nightingale'; and the answer must be, although quite contrary to almost universal opinion, that the nightingale is not a warbler. It is true that bird artists of the past were in the habit of drawing this bird as a thin and rather æsthetic figure, while poets added to the current misconception on the subject by insisting that the nightingale's song was always upon sad subjects and in a minor key; whereas we now know that the bird has much more in common with the robin or the redstart than it has with the warblers. At the same time, though the song is usually heard when the day is dying or dead, this is by no means the only period of song; and the song itself is in no sense a dirge, but a wonderfully full-bodied and energetic outpouring of most beautiful and stirring music.

Unfortunately this perfect song bird has not yet advanced its home to the whole area 'twixt Trent and Tweed,' though rumours have been circulated of its appearance far to the north of the usual area; so, this essay being intended to refer principally to Northumberland, the writer does not feel it his place to expatiate upon the subject.

The three main groups of birds whose music fills the country-side in spring having now been dealt with, it remains to wander from the subject of avian life discussed from the point of view of mass habit, and to make some remarks upon the habits of individuals themselves.

Here we find that, just as the love or mating instinct is responsible both for spring songs and for spring battles, so the same instinct and that of the protection of offspring gives rise to many interesting and amusing episodes between bird and man and between bird and bird.

Imagine a steep hillside covered with grass, brambles and primroses, and dotted here and there with fine old trees. A cock pheasant challenges loudly from near the top of the

slope, and is at once answered by a rival : a hen rises from the undergrowth in close proximity to the first prospective husband and flies down the hill closely pursued by the two ardent cocks. She is about to settle half-way down the slope when there suddenly emerges a third cock, who not only startles her, but also completely upsets the plans of a trial by combat which presumably had already been decided upon by the first two ! The net result of the whole affair is that, instead of the lady watching a fight between two rival lovers, she is left disconsolate, while three surprised and angry gentlemen fly off in a noisy flock in search of a battleground !

One walks up the grass head-rig of a field, one half of which is fallow and the other autumn-sown wheat. Among the clods of the former several peewits have their nests, and some of the young ones are already running quite strongly over what must be to them very mountainous country. Presently one of the old birds, evidently feeling that the approach of the human being bodes no good to her young chicks, flies towards the intruder, settles on the grass at a distance of some ten yards or so, and begins the well-tried method of drawing the unwelcome visitor to a safer distance by a pretence of injury. It is this action which has given to the peewit its alternate name of lapwing—at any rate, some people consider this to be the origin of the word.

Unfortunately for this particular bird's scheme, the growing wheat is just the right height to catch in the wings whenever they are dropped to give the correct appearance of injury. So amusing does this seem to the human being, in whose honour the whole performance is being given, that, after the third or fourth effort has been similarly frustrated by the wheat stems, the audience can no longer restrain his laughter. Instantly the peewit appears to have been hurt

in all her tenderest feelings, and what woman does like being laughed at ?

Hitherto her obvious intention has been to appear as wounded and as unhappy as possible, but now all this is changed in a moment. Seeing that her Machiavellian duplicity is greeted with no sympathy, but rather with ribald merriment, she decides that the time for direct action has arrived. Rising, therefore, quickly into the air, and taking up a suitable position above and behind the man who has insulted her, she swoops at his head time after time in quick succession ; just missing her apparent objective, but filling his ears with the swish of her wings, and also with her remarks, which are probably anything but parliamentary !

One's walk may now extend to the banks of a river, and here a new type of avian fauna will give the observer a sample of its spring habits.

One stands for a few minutes upon a rustic bridge to admire the way the stream eddies and swirls between the stone buttresses. Wagtails, both pied and grey, run actively along the sandy shore a few yards down-stream, ever and anon springing into the air to pursue an insect which has sought to escape the beak of its would-be captor by rising higher in the warm air. If it cannot be said that all nature is at peace, it is yet true that the scene is one where, apart from the slaughter of insects, everything appears happy and content. Suddenly this is changed. A small dark form comes into view round the bend a hundred yards or so down-stream. Rapidly it approaches, low over the water and propelled by a pair of small and rounded wings, distinctly reminiscent of those of the wren. The prominent white breast at once identifies it as a dipper or water-ousel, and the very large beakful of moss informs the onlooker that beneath the arches of the bridge upon which he has

taken his stand is the site that the little builder has selected for its nest.

The dipper is about to fly up direct to the half-completed nest when some slight movement betrays the human figure. Instantly the bird changes direction and alights on the stone parapet, while even before the wings are actually folded, the owner of those small round propellers is announcing to all and sundry the hideous truth that a human being has had the effrontery to place himself where he can spy upon the activities of the avian world. The mere fact that the complainant's beak is literally chock-full of moss seems to exercise not one atom of restraint upon the volume, or the continuity, of the very loud grumbling which the bird considers that the occasion warrants. Were any person to be gagged in similar proportion to the size of his mouth, faint indeed would be the sounds to which he could give utterance, but friend dipper is very differently made.

Both bird songs and spring call-notes, although differing widely according to the individual species, are yet more or less uniform within the species as each springtime comes round once more. But when one studies the much wider and altogether more surprising subject of the habits of individuals within any one species, one finds that the more one learns the more there is to be learnt. It is thus quite possible to reach the stage where at least 99 per cent. of the bird notes heard, at once enable the hearer to assign to the singer its correct name. This has both its advantages and disadvantages : the former being that bird identification is not only possible but quite easy without even a glimpse of the singer being obtained, while the latter is that, this knowledge once acquired, the large question-mark is removed from the subject, and how dull is a mere statement compared with the endless possibilities of a question !

There remains, naturally, the delight of listening to, and of appreciating, the many songs and call-notes, although the perpetual words 'which' and 'what' are now lacking from our minds.'

On the other hand, when we come to the habits of birds, especially in the mating and breeding season, the whole subject might be summed up as one of '¿-¿-¿,' the only possible variation being that another three question-marks could be added to the original three, and the description be just as accurate !

This is surely typical of the main joy of practical ornithology in the field, as compared to the scientific study of structural characteristics in museum specimens or skin collections.

It is true that a bird enthusiast living in, or in close proximity to, some well-known bird sanctuary, has far more opportunities open to him than has someone whose fate compels him to remain where perhaps only a few of the very commonest species are to be met with. None the less, so much variety do birds show in their character, that each of these observers, in his own particular sphere, can say with perfect truth, 'I haven't the least idea what that bird is going to do, or what new trait it will show me, to-morrow.'

It therefore behoves all lovers of Nature—and their number is probably larger to-day than ever before—to go about in the country with ears, eyes and mind wide open, ever on the look-out for new actions and new performances on the part of their avian friends, and ever thankful to these many performers for making life in this country so wonderfully attractive.

ALONG FRENCH RIVERS.

BY STEPHEN GWYNN.

IN the logic of nature, mountains come before rivers and determine their courses ; but rivers—apart from the fact that they hold fish—are of more interest to humanity, and it is always by watching watercourses that I build up my idea of a country.

Especially in France : the French, indeed, show their inclination to look at geography in this same way by calling nearly all their departments after the rivers which serve that admirably provided nation. It was great good luck for them to find their mountains placed in a big lump in the middle, and not, as for instance with us in Ireland, all round the coast. England is not a great deal better off ; its river valleys do not provide it with natural routes. Except for the beautiful stretch from Maidenhead to Oxford and another, of a very different beauty, between Leeds and Carlisle, I cannot recall any English railway lines that follow river courses ; whereas in France, almost wherever you travel, running water keeps the train company.

North of the Seine this is not so usual ; yet as we came from Dieppe, on a journey that was to run straight through from the Channel to the Mediterranean, for the first twenty miles one had the meanderings of the Scie, that pleasant little chalk stream, to look at ; and presently we picked up the Epte, another trout stream, and followed it to Gisors, where it heads west for Giverny. After that, great rivers came into the moving picture ; first the Oise for a little way, to its meeting with the Seine itself : but no rail

can afford to follow the meanderings of that capricious waterway, and one crosses and recrosses so often that it becomes hard to realise which way it flows.

Yet what a river ! and how Paris adorns and is adorned by it ! That night we had the good idea of dining at the *Rôtisserie Périgourdine*, on the little *Place* where the Boulevard St. Michel comes down to the Pont Neuf. There was savoury Perigordian food and wine of Sancerre, recommended to us by a wine waiter not in the waiter's conventional black and white, but with a cellarman's blue apron strapped about his ample waist by a leathern girdle ; full of good cheer, we emerged on to the *Place* and found a silvery moon turning the towers of Notre-Dame to a vaporous blue. But there are no words for the colours of that dim enchantment, nor for the sense of majestic well-proportioned mass that the quays and bridges gave as they loomed up through it ; while the heart of all this beauty was the strong river catching on its jewelled flow the reflection of innumerable lights. You can forget the Thames for weeks on end in London ; in Paris, the Seine is always felt everywhere and, where Paris is most worth seeing, will always be in sight.

Next day our way to Mont Dore in Auvergne took us for some way along the Seine—I had not realised that it enters Paris from the south. Leaving its docks and barges at Juvisy, we followed a dull little stream, the Orge, that recalls nothing to me, except indeed that Charles Péguy in the poem about his pilgrimage to Chartres tells that at the end of a long day's tramp, he found a bed

‘ dans le calme Dourdan,
Le jardin était clos dans un coude de l'Orge.’

But the Orge led Péguy out into that vast wheat-bearing

plain of La Beauce from which the spire of Notre-Dame de Chartres, 'tallest and the strongest stalk that ever rose towards a serene heaven,' dominates 'la profonde houle et l'océan des blés'—the deep surging ocean of a harvest enriched by the stored labour of two thousand years.

Yet our way was not towards Chartres but to the other towers of which Péguy has also written—the towers of the Maid of Orléans. We crossed the Loire at the northernmost point in its prodigious loop; here, it is within a hundred kilometres of Paris: but the sources of its head-waters are about a hundred kilometres from Arles on the delta of the Rhône. Running due north for a quarter of its course, it reaches the very heart of Burgundy in a department which takes its name from two absolutely opposite river systems, Saône-et-Loire; then inclining a little to the west, the Loire passes, amongst other places, Sancerre where our wine came from, and finally at Orléans swings sharply to the south. Only at Tours does it recognise that its business is to get straight to the Atlantic, and for these last two hundred kilometres it gives the rail a line to follow, to Nantes and St. Nazaire and the sea.

Our line cut straight across through Berri, crossing little rivers whose names come into Balzac and Georges Sand, the Beuvron and the Sauldre, until at Vierzon we picked up our guide, one of the Loire's chief tributaries, the Cher.

As a matter of fact, we should have done better to take the line farther east which passes through Nevers and then follows the Allier to Clermont-Ferrand—a journey of less than five hours; and from Clermont a motor-bus would have brought us to Mont Dore by the most scenic entrance, over the gorge above the Lac de Guéry. Our journey was eight hours by train; still, it showed a great deal of the

Cher which, like everybody else, I knew where it joins the Loire at Tours, and where the Château of Chenonceaux spans its width with a marvellous gallery. But it had never occurred to me to think of either Loire or Cher as salmon rivers. Yet there is said to be good salmon fishing in the Haute-Loire—five hundred miles from the sea; and an angler in Touraine told me that he had killed seven in one day on the Allier. Alas! he added that this was a glory of the past; the Allier has been dammed for electric power and the fish are cut off from their spawning grounds; and doubtless the same is true of the Cher, which in the gorges of its upper course was most tempting to a salmon fisher with its succession of swirling streams and long reaches. Still, even an angler must recognise one compensation; railway travel through all this region is free from smoke and smuts; the lines from Paris to the south are run by electric power, provided in summer by the melting snows of Alps and Pyrenees, in winter and spring by the impetuous flow of rivers like the Allier.

I suppose that the same has happened to the Dordogne, the river in which I took most interest; but the *Rôtisserie Périgourdine* was still offering *saumon de la Dordogne aux truffes*. I was not indeed expecting salmon away up in Auvergne, but the Dordogne is Mont Dore's river and I knew it where it passes the vineyards of St. Emilion near Bordeaux—a stream big as the Thames at Richmond but much stronger in its flow.

Alas, what I caught sight of when we reached the valley of Mont Dore was a sort of Highland burn—though with water of a greyish white instead of the peaty brown. Doubtless there were trout in the little pools where it plunges over rocks; but doubtless also the way to get them would be with a worm fished upstream and I was too lazy

for that venture. Flies made no appeal to them, nor did a tiny minnow which I saw a Frenchman fishing very expertly. But there were plenty of other attractions in that valley and its surrounding mountains, on whose grassy slopes great spikes and crags of basalt make a startling contrast. My companion, doing the cure, was not in trim for much walking ; but a little funicular took us up some seven or eight hundred feet, and then began the hunt. Never did I see such a country for wild flowers. The purple pansies were as big as the ordinary *viola cornuta* and far more vivid in colour. Everything was vivid—most of all perhaps the carmine-coloured pinks, which were everywhere scentless, while their paler, more delicately tinted cousins were deliciously fragrant. But the special glory was when we found gentians, for they were not yet fully out. These were not the *acaulis* familiar in gardens, and to say truth, not so good a blue—nor comparable to that tiny marvel of blueness, *gentiana verna*. The bell rose upright, and was slightly brown on the outside. But on one hill-top they stood in companies of eight or ten together—and near by I saw a rock covered over with growth of harebell (Scotland's bluebell), which, in Auvergne, grows so strong and stiff that it will last a week in water. We needed to buy no flowers for our rooms in Mont Dore. I think perhaps the most charming surprise to me was when I reconnoitred for passage round a little swamp and came suddenly on a corner full of Grass of Parnassus. It was long since I had seen those delicate white blossoms. A little farther on I met a clump of monkshood growing near some stones, and this flower, like all others, had an intensity and life in its colour that certainly it does not possess in the ordinary herbaceous border.

I did not meet it elsewhere till a young lady of nine

joined us, who had never before seen a mountain ; so she was taken from the funicular up to the Puy du Capucin—which certainly presents a fiercely mountainous appearance with the steep pinnacles that rise off its craggy side. There is, of course, an easy way round, but the zeal of this new mountaineer was such that I took her up scrambling over rocks ; and before we reached the top, I caught sight of monkshood in quantities on the steep face which at this point overhung a little. We went on to the top, proud to be higher than Ben Nevis or Snowden, and then as we came down I noticed that the overhanging face could be easily circumvented, and my young lady was eager for the experiment. Fortunately almost everything that grows on these hills which is not grass is bilberry, the best of hand-holds, so having explored, I let the child come after me—to the scandal of many road-abiding people who were going up the path. She returned in triumph to her guardian with her armful of blue flowers—all the more triumphant because the guardian does not like cliff edges.

Bilberries this year had little fruit, the wild raspberries practically none ; but most seasons one should be able to live on them there : and there were enough wood 'strawberries to tantalise us. I never saw a mountain country that tempted me more for walking. Very little heather, but pasture right up to the tops—not coarse, like the bent on the border fells, but such as I remember in the Lake Country. Why they do not run sheep on it puzzles me ; but it is all grazed by cattle. These 'outby' holdings, as the Border would call them, have their sheds, sheilings or byres (the local word *buron* must surely be some kin to 'byre'), and here the cows come in at milking time. We learnt a good deal about this way of life one day when we had walked up the valley, and a storm threatened. An

old man to whose amiable donkey we had been paying attention offered us the hospitality of his byre and for a matter of two hours we needed it. The Auvergnats have a name for churlishness, but no Scotch or Irish countryman could have been more welcoming than this one; and though his face was disfigured he had pleasant twinkling eyes and spoke French with surprisingly little touch of local accent. Like every other French employer, he had much to say about the exactions of labour. Still, in the days when he himself had been a *valet de ferme*, life had been a real slavery, and he used often to steal raw carrots to keep body and soul together. But like other wise men, he considered that there should be moderation in all things and was angry because the men on his inby farm, down the valley, were not doing all they might to get the hay cut. They had not the pride in their job. However, to do him justice he was much more eager to talk about the four little calves in his *buron* and to explain why his cows had no litter for the nights—they gave less milk when they lay down; and still more anxious to expatiate on his dog Barbet, temporarily an invalid. Barbet was too ‘hard’ a dog, inclined to bite the cows as he rounded them up, and so was generally worked in a muzzle; while so disabled, he had met an enemy and come by a bitten leg. He was a *chien loup*, by descent, but his ears were not pricked as an Alsatian’s should be, because the cat, deprived of her own infants, had suckled him when he was a pup, and so gave him *l’oreille basse*. I must say this for Barbet’s intelligence—that two or three days later when we met him and his master again, the man, being almost blind, did not recognise us, but Barbet abstained from all the fierce demonstrations that he had made at our first encounter. We brought away a pleasant memory of that *buron*. Moreover, at both the hotels where we stayed,

Auvergnat domestics were as obliging as any that we ever met in France, or out of it.

That region is well fitted to be the nurse of rivers, for even the steepest slopes have surprising little patches of swamp on them, from springs. If I had climbed the Pic du Sancy I should have seen the Dordogne running from its western flank and picking up new streamlets every five hundred yards, all of which must go out by Bordeaux ; while from the other side waters would be heading to join the Loire, and somehow or other make their way to Nantes. But without climbing one reached that other watershed by crossing the Col Morand on the way to Clermont-Ferrand ; an hour's drive took you from fields where hay was not yet cut to others where corn was not only stacked but carried ; and then the vine began to appear. Somewhere near Clermont a wine called Chantourgue is made which has local repute ; though I preferred a Corent Rosé from the slopes about Royat—singularly pleasant on a hot day. Chantourgue is heavy, like some of the Italian wines, especially those from soil of the same volcanic character. At Issoire, where we stayed a night before the next stage in our excursion, there was another local *cru*, not so likeable, but having its own distinctive character.

The drive to Issoire, over the Col Morand and by the Lac de Chambon, left us with a final supreme impression of that country's beauty. Sun was low across the landscape and brought into bold relief all its amazing range of contours, between which all was luminous blue haze. And when we reached the little old town, moon was in the sky, and in that blending of lights the great mass of Issoire's church loomed up in rich beauty. Enough daylight was left to bring out the ochre tints of its stone work, and the ring of chapels whose columns clustered against the fine half-circle

of its Romanesque basilica had that satisfying strength which belongs to the rounded arch. We went in by the west porch which, as usual in Auvergne, was almost bare of ornament, and found inside no light but what came from a few votive candles in the chapels of the choir. Yet it was enough to reveal the proportions of that vast building—it seemed as long as Vézelay—and the arched gloom of choir and transept had a mysterious beauty. Perhaps fuller light might not have conveyed so well the dignity of that nobly proportioned vaulting.

It was not too easy a journey from Issoire to Millau and the Gorges of the Tarn. But I could realise that we were still in the valley of the Allier, and for that matter in the department of Haute-Loire, till we reached Brioude and struck west for St. Flour—crossing, I suppose, the skirts of Monts de la Margéride. The Gévaudan was to the south of us, and I gather from Abel Chevalley's curious reconstruction of what is known about its mysterious *Bête* that to people of the Gévaudan, Auvergnats were outlanders. At St. Flour we reached the Fougère, across which the *Bête* was hunted a score of times, and in whose valley it destroyed more than a score of human beings. We crossed its deep gorge at Garabit by one of the longest and highest viaducts in Europe: a fellow-traveller told us that Eiffel, of the tower, had been its architect.

One thing was plain: from St. Flour onwards we were in the South—a sun-scorched country, far removed from the greenness of all about Mont Dore. St. Flour itself, in a ring fence of walls, was an attractive-looking little town: beyond that we had on our left high featureless hills, the Monts de la Margéride, all about which is the Gévaudan. But about Marvéjols (even the names here take on a new character) a new strange country came into sight, yellowish

soil of which we saw a high escarpment leading to edges of the plateau that is called here the *Causses* ; and every here and there *frontons* of yellow rock, sculptured by wind and weather, stood out so boldly that it was hard to distinguish them from buildings. Our fellow-traveller explained that they were full of caverns, show-places ; but the most important of all was, he said, at Roquefort. To it all the cheeses made from the milk of sheep that graze on the *causses* were brought for the final transformation that gives Roquefort its special character. A ferment is set up introducing mildewed bread (*la moisissure de pain*) ; but it is only in the atmosphere of these caverns that the result can be obtained. All attempts to produce Roquefort elsewhere have failed, he told us.—Roquefort in that country is almost as soft as cream cheese and with less sharpness in the taste than elsewhere : a very delicious product.

From Millau, sooner than wait for an autocar connection, we took a taxi to the Château de la Caze, in the very heart of the Tarn gorges—something over an hour's drive. Our road passed under one landmark that had fascinated me from the train—a hill crowned apparently with a huge fortress from which one column rose. But it was merely a freak of nature which local piety had sought to turn into a place of pilgrimage by erecting a great image of the Virgin there. Either piety or money ran out and only the pedestal is completed.

Beyond this we entered the Gorges proper, a winding canyon, with cliffs in some places a thousand feet high. The road is skilfully engineered at no great height above the river ; in some places tunnels are driven through the rock, in others a terrace is formed with shelving overhang. And everywhere from the cliff-sides there stand out pillars, crags and rock-masses of every fantastic shape. It defies

description. Yet for me the scene lacked its central inspiration ; for I had conceived of the Tarn as a most violent torrent, and there it was, that hot August afternoon, barely able to fill its banks : in many places fordable little more than ankle deep. Well enough I knew that trout would not rise in so lifeless a water and another of my hopes was dashed. Still when we got to the *château*—an authentic fortress of the fourteenth century which has been gradually adapted to modern habitation and is now open as a guest house—my first thought was to try my luck in the half-hour available before dinner.

Just above the *château* was a long pool which in May or June should be perfect for fishing, but now had scarcely a current in it. Still, the sun was long off the water, and I saw a trout begin an evening rise under the far bank. It was a long way across and as I tried to reach him, and thought to myself that one should always have waders on that river, I was aware of steps on the gravel ; and there were Adam and Eve with a fishing-rod between them. They wore, indeed, the evolved type of fig-leaf usual at every *plage*, but they had not acquired the colouring which in sun bathers, as presumably in our first parents, modifies the impression of nudity. However, with perfectly well-bred voices and not the least self-conscious, they said that they hoped I should not mind being watched. Eve, it appeared, was under instruction in the art of casting and Adam had noticed me trying to throw a long line. I wish that my performance had justified the compliment implied by catching that trout ; but my onlookers who could see the fish in the water said that he seemed to take no interest in my fly. I cannot flatter myself that it was even moderately well presented ; but at least I know now how to solve the problem of waders if ever I go again to

fish the Tarn. There was agreement that from June onwards fishing there is chiefly and most suitably done with nets. Yet I think that even in August something might be made of the evening rise.

But we did not stay long enough to try that out. When we dined that night on a terrace overlooking the water, I think that the river's languid flow accounted for the sense of confinement, almost of imprisonment, which beset us in that narrow passage at the turn of a corridor with monstrous and threatening walls.

So, giving up our plan of staying there to explore, we decided to get our small baggage sent on by the bus that would pass in the afternoon and meet us at the Cirque des Baumes—the lower end of the boat excursion. But the upper end was at La Malène, five kilometres from our *château*; and foolishly I took my companions' word for it that five kilometres was nothing to them.

The sun blazed full, even by ten o'clock, on that terraced roadway and trees were few along it; but I soon discovered that a path led along the river, and once down there, it was another story among the willows and tall spiky poplars. I never saw so clear a water and in its clearness I saw trout; the child bathed rapturously while I fished down a long shallow stream and then the deep pool under a cliff into which it swirled beautifully. That pool was fifteen or twenty feet deep at least and probably a good deal more: low water or high water, that beautiful river must be dangerous. It was pleasant to make acquaintance with it by putting a fly down—but quite unprofitable: and we had to be getting on. Unhappily after half a mile the track ended, we were forced to scramble back on the road, and then began a pilgrimage of pain. The glare on that asphalt was terrific and heat assaulted us in waves from the

cliff on our right. But at last we reached Malène, and there a serviceable innkeeper got us drinks in the shade outside, and presently a large and most excellent lunch in a cool dining-room. For my taste, the Grand Hotel at La Malène would be a better place to stay for fishing and exploration than the historic *château*. The Gorge opens out somewhat, and on the left bank opposite, a road comes down from the *causses* to the bridge; probably the village is several hundred years older than the *château*.

By two o'clock our boatmen were ready and a French traveller asked leave to take passage with us. The boat is a punt, much narrower than those of the Thames but very like what anglers know on the Shannon or Blackwater; only the Irish cots are worked by one man with a paddle and another with a pole; on the Tarn both had the *perche*. Seats were put across the cot; aft of them the men piled in the cycles which they would use to come back, and we shoved into a swift shallow. Presently we met other cots that had made the excursion coming back, towed up in a string behind a big mule that splashed through the fords from one gravel bank to the next. But in high water this is not possible: you come down in three-quarters of an hour and it is nearly four hours' work to pole up again.

If it was only for the beauty of that blue-green translucent water, changed into a hundred shades by swirls and currents or by shadow of the bank, that excursion would be richly worth making; but such setting for beautiful water I never dreamed of. Cliffs rising a thousand feet from the Atlantic in Donegal or Achill are impressive enough, but not in the same way as these sheer precipices, nor are they cut into such fantastic forms. There are giant needles, giant thimbles, giant mushrooms and there is the lady with the parasol and there is the group of hooded monks;

and all these our guide scrupulously pointed out. But it was a deal more interesting to watch the skill with which he manœuvred the cot past corners where a sharp stream swung it right in against the rock and then did its best to upset us with the back eddy. And at the narrowest place of all, where the river has only the length of a fishing-rod between two cliffs so undercut that one knew the opening is still narrower, I could see greenery of ferns that might have grown in Killarney—extraordinarily unlike all the sun-scorched vegetation of all else in that valley.

The vine is everywhere, rooted on crumbling slopes on little terraces ; and when I asked about vintages, I learnt that good years elsewhere are bad years there ; what they want is moisture, what they do not want is too much sun. Certainly there was nothing more enjoyable in our six weeks of travel than that hour and a quarter of being poled down the Tarn ; and a sympathetic fellow-traveller made the journey even pleasanter. We were sorry to part from him at the Cirque des Baumes—though like any other thoughtful Frenchman at present, he was desperately uneasy about the future of France.

The autocar whirled us back to Millau showing us different aspects of the same amazing gorge. At one point below the Cirque the river-bed is blocked up with boulders through which in low water it makes its way quietly ; but what a turmoil there must be there in time of flood ! For some reason we turned off the main road to Peyreleau, where a considerable tributary, the Jonthe, is crossed by a bridge built very long before motor-buses were thought of—built, in fact, for traffic by pack mules ; and there was much difference of opinion here as to who should give way.

In Millau, which is a good-sized town, we decided for the Hôtel de Commerce, where there was an inner courtyard

with little trees growing and at the centre of it a large fountain springing out of a marble basin in the shape of a four-leaved shamrock. I suppose that basin was seven feet across and all the water in it was filled with a crawling mass of crayfish—at the very least a couple of thousand of the creatures. It was explained that in the season of the *manceuvres*, crayfish are served at every meal—and as the dining-room would hold seventy or eighty guests, provision had to be ample. It certainly was. The Midi is greedy for this delicacy, though they do not bestow the same research on its preparation as the folk in Bresse and Bugey: and they had them on the table at Malène. I told our fellow-passenger in the boat that we had crayfish in England and in Ireland but seldom troubled to catch or cook them. ‘*Mais c’est un crime,*’ said he.

‘A fool does be lucky,’ is the Irish saying, and I was rewarded for making a mistake about our train from Millau eastwards by finding that there was an easy journey by autobus to Montpellier. This was not one of the subsidiary services which the P.L.M. provide, but a private and highly unofficial venture. ‘When do we arrive at Montpellier?’ somebody asked as the big car continued to stand in the *place* at Millau. ‘How should I know when the bus will arrive when I do not know when it will start?’ the driver answered her. But we got away, headed up the Tarn again as far as Peyreleau and then followed the valley of the Jonthe, which in any other part would be taken for a most remarkable ravine. As the road climbed zig-zagging up, we got our first view of the *causses*—skirting the great Causse Méjean which lies between Florac and the Tarn’s gorges. Except the Burren country in Clare I never saw anything so stony; but Atlantic air brings moisture to all the delicate greenery that sprouts between

clefts of the limestone in Burren : here all seemed baked to a greyness ; the scrubby bushes might be good goat foddering, but a sheep cannot find much nourishment in an acre of that savage upland. Then we left the gorge and actually saw straight road stretches before we reached a col and found water running from us instead of towards. It was as much as two feet wide but was marked *Pêche Réservee*—probably a happy hunting-ground for *écrevisses*. But as we swept down rapidly by great curves, there was another large valley below us—the valley of the Hérault, which gives its name to the department we had now reached. We were now on a Mediterranean watershed, and once we reached cultivable ground, olive trees everywhere were a new feature in the landscape. They were planted sometimes in rows through the vineyards, sometimes along the edges ; but every other inch of soil that could hold vines held them. Up at the top of the gorge, there was a curious reminder of Connemara : fields were divided from each other by loosely piled stones, accumulated in the process of clearing the soil. But in Connemara a stone wall is a thing you can see through and is easily knocked down or built up : these were walls piled ten or fifteen feet wide at the base, making fine shelter belts against the winds that must rage up and down that gap in the hills.

Everywhere here, and indeed everywhere in the Midi, the vine is left much to its own devices, not trained and tutored as is done for the *grands crus* of Bordeaux or Burgundy ; and the less careful method gains in picturesqueness. But of course the grape grows so easily here that people cultivate it for quantity rather than for quality ; this one department of the Hérault, whose name few in England know, produces more wine than all Bordeaux and Burgundy put together, yet produces nothing of choice repute. At the

brasserie where we ate at Montpellier a notice stated that all the wines served there *en carafe* came from a certain *domaine* which no doubt has a local reputation. But they were all made by mass production and not made with a thought of slow-maturing excellence.

Leaving the valley of the Hérault, which flows out a little west of Cette, we crossed some high ground before approaching Montpellier, peat and heather were about us, and it was odd to see vines growing close up against a patch of bare black turf: farther on, another group of them was tucked into a nook of the hill, just as a potato patch would be in Connemara—and sheltered in the same way by stone walls.

I am all for this way of travel by autobus; it is cheap, any amount of luggage can be carried on top, and one sees not only more of the country but of the people, with the comings and goings at the frequent stops. We were not anywhere crowded, and open windows made it much cooler than railway travel. Besides, the roads in the low country here have great beauty with the great lines of plane and elm that lead into and out of the various villages; sometimes there would be a colonnade of trunks a full mile long stretching ahead of us. That is why we decided to make our next stage from Montpellier to Avignon by the same method—though indeed it involved a change of car at Nîmes. But this is all country that everybody knows—though I for my own part did not know what an impressive town Tarascon was going to be: Tartarin had something to boast of. Still I suppose that the real underlying moral of Daudet's story is that even if the Midi piles it on somewhat, it really does produce extraordinary things and extraordinary men.

And what a river it has! After we had seen the Rhône

that even after the drouth of summer swirled fiercely past the piers of the old bridge at Avignon, Tartarin would have had a right to say, What is the sense of writing about other rivers ?

Still, for my own part, I like them of a more approachable size than either Rhône or Loire or Seine. And I like them to hold salmon. If it were only for that, my allegiance goes to those that flow into the Atlantic : and perhaps, for choice, to those that issue at Bordeaux rather than even to the Loire's noblest tributaries.

CAIN.

*Possibly he is asleep,—
And yet he is too still for that ;
Too rigid ; and his freckled hand
Lies too straight along the sand ;
And the face I'm gazing at
Is too pale. If I could weep,
(But useless tears cannot atone)
I might have ease. How I regret,
Alas ! too late, the silly spite,
The petty pricks that caused the fight.*

*.
His hair above his brow is wet,
And I am terribly alone.*

DERIC HARRIS.

‘A PURITANE ONE.’

BY ROBERT H. HILL.

THERE is a jesting rhyme that has survived through more than three centuries, and is familiar still :

‘*To Banbury came I, O profane one,
And there I met a puritane one,
A’hanging of his cat on Monday
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.*’

The lines are better remembered than the name of Richard Brathwaite, who wrote them, and they have outlived all the grave books at which Brathwaite laboured. When, for example, he wrote the book called *The English Gentleman* he set out to give improving advice to his fellow men in the ordering of their daily lives, but time has jested with the sober moralist and has spared from oblivion only his little joke at the expense of the sectaries. *The English Gentleman* was only one among many such books in that age, all stuffed with rules of conduct and moral precepts ; they were widely read in their day, and are now as utterly forgotten as if they had never been. Nevertheless, there are curious passages in Brathwaite’s book and in its sequel, *The English Gentlewoman*, which seem to me to justify its brief resurrection out of the dust and neglect of the ages.

It is quite impossible to read far in *The English Gentleman* without realising that the writer of it was deeply fascinated by the stage. Here was a man whose imagination had been caught by the theatre and, because his mind had a philosophic bent, he tended to see his fellow men and women as actors in a greater drama than any he had witnessed at

the Blackfriars theatre. For him there was always the stage of earth as well as the stage of the Globe. The idea that 'all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players' gave its own colour to his thoughts, and the metaphors of the theatre were woven into all his work. He loved to coin such phrases as 'this theatre of earth,' 'the stage of our State,' and such words as 'act,' 'scene,' 'tragedy,' 'comedy,' 'tiring-house,' 'spectator,' are scattered thickly through his pages.

This sense of life as a vast stage-play could be drawn upon to give point to all his grave precepts and solemn admonitions, and he found that it served him equally well for every occasion. Rebuking the society women of his time for spending whole mornings about their toilet, he tells them: 'Think how this world is your stage, your life an act. The tiring-house where you bestowed such care, cost and curiosity must be shut up when your night approacheth.' His exhortations to prayer are dug out of the same metaphorical seam: 'Make your chamber your private theatre, wherein you may act some devout scene to God's honour.' Brathwaite's perfect gentleman is one who 'hath played his part on this stage of earth with honour, and now in his exit makes heaven his harbour,' while backsliders are warned that 'most part of all our spectators' eyes are fixed on you, whose censure will prove as quick-sighted as your error, accounting you unworthy those brave parts bestowed on you, because misacted by you.' When he deems it desirable to emphasise the importance of the different social classes keeping their own stations, it is, as usual, the theatre which provides the illustration:

'In any theatral [*sic*] presentment, what becomes a peer or potentate would not sort with the condition of any inferior substitute; every one must be suited to the person

he presents. So in the theatre of State, distinct fashions both in habit and complement (manners) are to be retained, according to the place wherein he is ranked.'

It would be easy to quote many more examples of these stage metaphors, but the foregoing ones should be enough to show clearly the direction in which Richard Brathwaite's imagination was prone to run. Now it is due to just this predominant interest in the stage that *The English Gentleman* still has its rewards for those who will be at the pains to read it. For this it must be studied, if it is studied at all, rather than for the purpose that its author had in mind. Probably none of us would be any better citizens after plodding through these five hundred folio pages of earnest advice, as heavy with classical and scriptural quotation and allusion as apple-trees with fruit in autumn. Yet one would guess that a man so touched with the glamour of the stage as Brathwaite clearly was could hardly help giving us some light on the theatre of his time, incidentally and almost in spite of himself. So, in fact, it is. An odd page or two, a sentence, a phrase here and there, tell us something of the theatre of Shakespeare's days, of the habits of the theatre-going public, and of the attitude of that other public which turned away from the theatre with horror and disgust.

Brathwaite was in something of a dilemma. Being the man he was, and living when he did (he was born about 1588), he was prevented from giving free rein to that instinct for the theatre which he so evidently possessed. The man who could pen the Banbury quatrain was no sectary, but Brathwaite was strongly religious, and in the early seventeenth century religion—not, it is true, without some good grounds—looked upon the stage with no tolerant eye. Thomas Taylor, of Reading, was expressing

the view of a large and growing number of people when he spoke of 'dice, condemned by the law of the land, and cards, and lascivious dancing, plays, interludes, and all merriments, wherein is no praise, virtue, or good report.' William Prynne asked in his *Histriomastix*, 'Who can be so grossly stupid as to think to learn any grace or virtue from a play-house?' and although Prynne lost his ears for that book of furious attack on the stage, he had expressed the views of thousands of his fellow countrymen. Brathwaite, with enough of the Puritan in him to keep his enthusiasm for the stage-plays rather severely in check, made the best compromise that he could. He exhorted women to have nothing to do with the theatre and put on record his view that it was 'a custom very irregular and undecent that women should frequent places of public resort, as stage-plays, wakes, solemn feasts, and the like.' As for the men, he condemned those who made it their habit to attend the theatres constantly, but thought that, used moderately, the playhouses were 'not altogether to be disallowed.' Having done so much, he seems to have felt himself free to turn round and defend the stage, point by point, against its critics.

According to our author, the Puritan case against the theatres contained seven points, most of them being based on some text of Scripture. The one reason which appeals to most people to-day as a sound argument for avoiding the theatres of that time, namely, that they were notorious places of immorality and frequented by the worst elements of the London population, is noticeably absent from the indictment. The first objection put forward was that it was improper for boys to wear women's clothes on the stage, to which Brathwaite answered that the case had been submitted to the judgment of the learned Theodore Beza,

one of the reformers, and that he had laid it down that the performance of women's parts by boys was not unlawful. In the second place, the Puritans quoted the text, 'Turn away mine eyes, that I see no vanity.' Brathwaite retorted that vanities were things vain, light, foolish, frivolous and fruitless, and pointed out that in that sense 'our stage-plays may in no sort be termed vanity.'

'Woe unto those that laugh now,' quoted the enemies of the stage, and Brathwaite capped the quotation with the text from Ecclesiastes, 'There is nothing better than for man to rejoice in his works'; he argued that it was not all merriment, but only immoderate laughter, that the Scriptures condemned. The Puritans fell back on their fourth text: 'I say unto you that for every idle word, etc.,' and Brathwaite told them that the expression referred to 'lies, calumnies, all inordinate and ridiculous speeches,' and could not reasonably be stretched to mean the condemnation of all plays. So the battle went on, and the Scriptural texts were bandied to and fro; it would be tedious to follow its whole course.

There was one final objection that was made against the writers of plays by those whom Brathwaite calls 'our stage-stingers and poet-scourgers,' and it was of a rather different character from the others. The criticism was that the dramatists laid aspersions on men of eminent quality and would spare none if they could make profit out of their attacks. With this criticism Brathwaite found himself completely in sympathy, and he said that such writers deserved to be whipped for their pains because, 'to use the words of one who was once an eminent statist, "some things are privileged from jest, namely, religion, matters of State, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity."' In making this

quotation from Bacon's *Essays*, Brathwaite seems almost to have gone out of his way to avoid referring more definitely to the author. 'One who was once an eminent statist' appears to be a somewhat curious way of referring to the greatly renowned writer who had only been a year or two in his grave when Brathwaite wrote. Elsewhere our author makes a quotation from one whom he calls 'that witty Centurist,' apparently referring to Owen Feltham, whose *Century of Resolves* came out in 1620. Although these essays were much read and admired, Feltham's style was far inferior to that of Lord Bacon, whom he imitated. His own age cannot have been unconscious of the difference between the two volumes of essays, and yet Brathwaite's manner of referring to the two writers leaves the impression that it was Feltham whom everybody knew and read, while Bacon appears as some politician of the more or less distant past who, either in speech or writing, had happened to throw out a pregnant sentence. In the six or seven years between Bacon's political downfall and the time when Richard Brathwaite wrote his book there had appeared from the fallen Lord Chancellor's pen such works as *Henry VII*, *Silva Silvarum*, and the *New Atlantis*, but Brathwaite's almost slighting phrase hints that perhaps the shadow of the political disgrace had hung over Bacon to the end, and even afterwards. For all that he had written, Bacon remained merely one who *was once* an eminent statist.

When our author alluded to the works of his contemporaries he rarely acknowledged them, even so indirectly as he did in the case of Bacon and of Owen Feltham. That is so much the worse for the modern reader of *The English Gentleman*, who must inevitably lose the point of many of the allusions in consequence. The reason for this silence was perhaps to be found in Brathwaite's reluctance to load

his volume with marginal notes ; he was by no means the only author of his time who went out of his way to explain, with evident pride in his own restraint, that he had tried to leave his margin as blank as possible, so that his readers' pens might wander there as they would. He puts it thus :

'For the margin, I have not charged it with many notes, lest you should neglect the garment by being taken too much with the border. Improve it to your best profit, and let God have the glory of it.' Many readers' marginal scribbles, in that age or any other, were not calculated to add much to the glory either of God or of themselves.

The few allusions to Shakespeare's writings which are scattered here and there throughout the book make it plain not merely that Braithwaite himself knew the plays, but that he thought it safe to assume that all his readers knew them also. It is more than likely that one so enamoured of the theatre as Braithwaite was had seen some of the plays acted at the London theatres in Shakespeare's lifetime. Nevertheless, his first reference to a work of Shakespeare's is a disparaging one and it concerns, not a play, but the poem *Venus and Adonis*. He doubtless admired Shakespeare as a dramatist, but he had no admiration for the writer of a 'lascivious book,' and he wrote :

'Much more blessed were the State if restraint were made of composing or publishing such subjects, where every leaf instructs youth in a new lesson of folly. . . . When the sex where modesty should claim a native prerogative gives way to foment of exposed looseness, by not only attending to the wanton discourse of immodest lovers, but carrying about them (even in their naked bosoms, where chastest desires should only lodge) the amorous toys of *Venus and Adonis* ; which poem, with others of like nature, they hear with such attention, peruse with such devotion, and retain with such delectation, as no subject can equally relish their

unseasoned palates like those lighter discourses. Yea, (which hath struck me to more admiration) I have known divers whose unriper years half assured me that their green youth had never instructed them in the knowledge nor brought them to conceit of such vanities, excellently well read in those immodest measures ; yea, and prompt enough to show proofs of their reading in public places.'

Later, again, he exhorted his women readers that '*Venus and Adonis* are unfitting consorts for a lady's bosom. Remove them timely from you, if they ever had entertainment by you, lest, like the snake in the grass, they annoy you.'

Shakespeare's poem was thus picked out, by one who was far from being numbered among the strict Puritans, as an outstanding example of the indecent literature of the age ; he would have punished the Bard of Avon not only for publishing, but apparently also for writing and privately circulating the poem. Incidentally, Brathwaite makes it clear that Shakespeare's work was widely read, and quoted and discussed, by the younger generation of the time. His words raise a question in the minds of those who read them to-day : if the *Venus and Adonis* enjoyed such a wide popularity as he implies, and if nearly every young woman in society found it fashionable to carry about with her a copy of her own, what has befallen all those early editions of the poem ? We should have expected many early copies of a book that was so widely read to have survived the ravages of the centuries, and yet they are to-day excessively rare. Assuming that Brathwaite did not exaggerate, how is it possible to account for such a general disappearance, unless there was possibly some systematic destruction of the book under the Puritan rule ? So far as I am aware, no hint of such a destruction has come down to us.

If our author's sense of propriety was shocked by *Venus*

and *Adonis*, he says nothing to suggest that he did not admire the rest of Shakespeare's work. An allusion, a phrase here and there, give a hint that he had studied the plays attentively. We might reasonably have expected this man, keenly interested in the stage and familiar with the work of his age's greatest dramatist—possibly even with the dramatist himself—to tell us something at least of how Shakespeare and his work impressed his contemporaries. He tells us almost nothing. Sometimes, indeed, he only succeeds in adding to the obscurity which seems to cling round every early reference to Shakespeare. It is as if a spell were laid upon the writers of that time, forbidding them to tell a plain tale and leading their enchanted pens away into a labyrinth of ambiguities, veiled hints, and sheer unintelligibility. Take, as one example of this strange obscurity, the lines written to Shakespeare by John Davies, of Hereford :

*'Some say (good Will) which I, in sport, do sing,
Had'st thou not plaid some kingly parts in sport,
Thou hadst bin a companion for a King;
And, beene a king among the meaner sort.
Some others raile; but, raile as they thinke fit,
Thou hast no rayling, but, a raigning Wit:
And honesty thou sow'st, which they do reape,
So, to increase their Stocke, which they do keepe.'*

That must have meant something to the man who wrote it; presumably it also meant something to his readers. Nobody pretends to know what it means to-day.

To return to Richard Brathwaite, the first suggestion that he had seen or read a Shakespearean play comes with his use of the word 'Timonist' to describe those disgruntled ones who are on bad terms with the world and who find little to please them anywhere in it. He rather emphasises

the word, as if it were one that he had coined for himself, and I have not met with it elsewhere. He preaches to his readers that they should be 'neither Timists nor Timonists, fawners nor frowners,' and talks of 'these censorious Timonists, whose poor degenerate spirits are ever delighted most in detracting from women, or aspersing some unworthy disgrace upon their sex.' The manner of the references gives the impression that *Timon of Athens* was a play well known to English ladies and gentlemen at the time. Here and there, the reader is struck by a verbal parallel with Shakespeare that seems to be something more than accidental. Take, for instance, this phrase :

'Youth, swimming ever with bladders of vain glory.'

The metaphor may have been Brathwaite's own, but it brings to mind immediately the words of Wolsey in *Henry VIII* :

'I have ventured,
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
This many summers in a sea of glory——'

Again, when Brathwaite asks, 'Who for tongue more powerfully persuasive than Mark Antony?' we may suppose that his thoughts were dwelling on the funeral oration in *Julius Cæsar*, since there is nothing in Plutarch to warrant such a sweeping tribute to Antony's powers of oratory. Brathwaite refers to Antony just afterwards as 'that mirror of men,' and in *Antony and Cleopatra* Mæcenus calls Antony a 'spacious mirror' in whom Cæsar must needs see himself. Our author's exclamation, 'How like Colosso's others walk, which discovers their haughtiness!' might appear to spring from a conscious or unconscious memory of Cassius's 'He doth bestride the narrow world like a Colossus.' However that may be, there seems to be an unmistakable

allusion to Shakespeare's work in Brathwaite's condemnation of those whom he calls Timonists, of whom he says that 'their whole life (is) a Comedy of errors.'

There was a popular story at that time, which Brathwaite has preserved, about a woman in whom love of the theatre amounted to a passion. She was, he says,

'a gentlewoman of our own nation, who so daily bestowed the expense of her best hours upon the stage as, being surprised by sickness, even unto death, she became so deaf to such as admonished her of her end as when her physician was to administer a receipt unto her, which he had prepared to allay the extremity of that agonising fit wherewith she was then assailed, putting aside the receipt with her hand as if she rejected it, in the very height and heat of her distemper, with an active resolution used these words unto her doctor : " Thanks, good Horatio, take it for thy pains." So inapprehensive was she of death at her end because she never meditated of death before her end.'

' Thanks, good Horatio, take it for thy pains ! ' At first sight it looks like a quotation from *Hamlet*, but there is no such line in the play. *Hamlet*, however, was not the only play of that age which included a character named Horatio, and the words may have referred to Don Horatio in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, or to some other. Whatever play it came from, the line was obviously very well known ; Brathwaite quotes it without troubling himself to give the smallest explanation, and takes it for granted that his readers will understand and appreciate the allusion. The story hardly rings true ; a dying woman would not, in the seventeenth century any more than now, tell her doctor to drink his own physic for the sake of making an indifferent pun on the word ' pains.' It is more likely to have originated as a tavern jest, perhaps in some inn where actors congregated, but Brathwaite found in it an opportunity of warning

a public which was thoroughly familiar with the plays of the age against yielding too much to the fascination of this still novel and exciting form of entertainment.

Although it is so rare to find any writer in the early seventeenth century actually quoting lines from a play, yet it seems probable that quotations from the tragedies and comedies of the time were used in ordinary conversation among educated people to a much greater extent than they are now. It may be that the theatre, although many eschewed it altogether, entered more largely into the life of the people than it does to-day; it is possible that, even if the groundlings went there for nothing but the clowning and the scenes of bloodshed, the rest of the audience brought to the theatre a graver and a more attentive spirit than does the theatre-going public of our days, which often forgets all about a play in less time than it takes to sit through it. Not only the agents of the 'pirate' printers committed to memory the lines they heard on the stage, but it must have been quite a common practice for ordinary members of the audience to carry home long passages in their minds, for the sake of quoting them to their friends. How else could Thomas Taylor—to refer again to the Puritan preacher of Reading—when lamenting over the inattentiveness of his congregation, have said:

'Thy memory is sure enough at a play. In any worldly matter thou canst carry away and repeat long discourses from point to point; only here (in church) is a short memory, because of short affection.'

Obviously, it was not necessary to be a playgoer in order to be familiar with the plays of the day, and while Brathwaite was never tired of condemning the society women who spent all their mornings in the boudoir, afternoons in a playhouse, and evenings at public banquets, he had no

complaint to make of women who enjoyed *reading* plays. Indeed, he suggests that there were women in his day who were not only readers and critics, but even improvers of plays. There were many clever women, he said, who 'have the happiness to judge of a well-composed line, to breathe spirit in invention, to correct the indisposure of a scene, to collect probably (a work which I must confess of greatest difficulty) what may best comply with the humour of the time, or suit best with the propriety of court masque or public stage.' One would like to know more of these nameless women of letters in the age of Shakespeare, who could correct the indisposure of a scene and could touch up a promising play in such a way as to make it a success at court or in the public theatre.

In laying down his endless precepts for the women of three hundred years ago, and in rebuking them for their shortcomings and frivolities, the writer of *The English Gentlewoman* contrives to tell us, their remote descendants, many things about them that we are grateful to him for recording. Among them there were not only clever women who could take up their quills to improve and enliven a scene in a play or court masque, but also adventurous spirits who could challenge men in what was even more completely a masculine preserve. The Violas and Rosalinds were not all on the stage. There was a woman, whom Brathwaite had often encountered in the London streets, who habitually wore the clothes of a man, and he does not record that the authorities ever interfered with her for doing it. She frequented places where the Londoners congregated, and talked imperiously on every topic that came under discussion; she was quick-tempered, and involved in every quarrel that broke out. Often she offered her services as second in a duel.

Another young woman of the time went even further than this, for she fought a duel—and won. She was a London girl, adventurous and high-spirited, and although she never considered it necessary, like the other, to go about in a masculine doublet and puffed breeches, she went alone to the places of popular resort and took a prominent part in all the recreations and discussions there. Not unnaturally it happened that she was, as our author describes it, 'suited by a young Cavaliero, who was so taken with the height of her spirit, wherewith she was endowed, as he preferred it before the beauty of an amorous face, wherewith she was but meanly enriched.' Realising that he had no honourable intentions, she decided to play a trick upon him, and promised that if he would come with a coach to a certain place, at a given hour, she would fly with him into the country. She kept the appointment, but what happened afterwards, in our author's own words, was this :

'Before she would mount her coach, calling him aside, she tells him how she had vowed never to consent to any man in that kind till she had first tried his metal in the field. Draw he must, or she will disgrace him ; in which combat, instead of a more amorous conflict, she disarmed him and, with a kick, wished him ever after to be more wary how he attempted a maiden's honour.'

To the London people who had heard these tales and perhaps seen the heroines of them at the playhouses, taverns and bear-baitings, there would have seemed nothing fantastic in the exploits of Shakespeare's heroines wandering adventurously in the disguise of youths.

Although Brathwaite never believed, with the Puritans, that stage-plays could be condemned out of the Scriptures, he had his own grounds for quarrel with the theatres, and

one of these was that they were responsible for the shutting up of country manor-houses and the resulting decay of the countryside. It was mainly the fault of the women, he thought. They were becoming so enamoured of these stage spectacles that they would no longer rest content in their country homes, like their mothers and grandmothers, but badgered their husbands to shut up house and live in London, where they could spend their afternoons in the theatres. The rage for foreign travel was bringing about the same result, but it was the theatres which provided the worst temptation. Thus the fine old manor-houses were shuttered and blind and inhospitable, and poor wayfarers did not know where to turn for a friendly fireside and a bed when darkness fell. 'Country houses must be barred up, lest the poor passenger should expect what is impossible to find, relief to his want, or a supply to his necessity.' Brathwaite took his countrywomen gravely to task in this matter :

'Do these interludes or pastimes of the time delight you? Begin you to disaffect a country life, and with a night persuasive rhetoric to incline the affections of your easy husbands to plant in the city, and to leave their ancient manor-houses, sometimes memorable for hospitality? Trust me, these are no promising arguments for modesty. Plants transplanted do seldom prosper.'

The movement from the countryside to the city had begun, and it was the stage-plays that were giving it impetus. One cannot help suspecting that perhaps Richard Brathwaite, who deplored it with evident sincerity, would himself have chafed in exile in the country, out of touch with the playhouses which had taken so powerful a hold on his imagination. With the merchant Antonio, he held the world to be 'a stage where every man must play a

part,' and perhaps this man who loved the theatre would have confessed to himself that he would rather play his own part in London, the centre of the stage of English life, than play it obscurely in the wings. The old controversies are dead now, and half-forgotten. Brathwaite, with his affection for the theatre clouded by his uneasy doubts whether that love were honourable or not, moves our interest but hardly our sympathy, because we cannot even in imagination re-enter the world where these old controversies were living things. Yet if the lapse of centuries has worn away the bonds of sympathy between him and us, the old writer with his gossiping tales, and his reflections on plays and on playgoers of a lost world, is one whose acquaintance is still worth making.

GOTTFRIED.

BY J. N. GOLDSMITH.

It was at Klappersteg, years ago, one Christmas afternoon, that I set out for a walk through the woods, just as if it were summer, with my map and spiked stick. I passed the Nursery slopes, and crowds of visitors falling about in the snow in the hope of learning the Telemark and the Christiania.

A mile from the village I was tempted by the firm snow to leave the road and follow the track of a skier into the pine woods; according to the map I could work round to the hotel in time for dinner.

It was about five o'clock when I entered the gloom of the woods—quite silent except for a rare fall of snow from an overladen branch. The melancholy reverie of the pines was oppressive. I was soon reflecting what would be the fate of the franc, and what would be left of the atom when Rutherford had finished with it :

The snow was hard for a long distance and my thoughts were now busy in a distant past. The village doctor of Ziegelhausen, how well he played Chopin—and then his testing question when I mentioned the Professor of Philosophy—did he stand on the solid rock of science :

At this point of my excursion I fell into a hollow snow-drift, and climbing out with difficulty, I emerged in a small clearing by a stream—the noisy Petersbach on the edge of the wood. I knew I had to turn right-handed and cross the brook—it was bridged here, but only by two fir-poles covered with ice.

While I stood there deciding that the bridge was impossible, I realised that I was not alone. Beside me in the clearing stood a very small man. In the dim light I could see his brown face wrinkled and smiling broadly, his lantern unlit slung over his shoulder, his long loose cap hanging over one ear. He looked me up and down and grinned.

A tourist completely equipped with map, stick, spiral puttees but unable to cross the brook was amusing to a native—there was nothing humiliating in that—his mirth seemed to embrace the woods and the snowfield beyond as if the day and the hour had something cheering for him.

I explained in tolerable German that I was making for the hamlet somewhere across the field, but I could not cross the poles.

Assuring me that I could, the little man—he was well made, no dwarf—walked out on to the poles, and standing on one foot kicked off the ice with the other. He returned evidently thinking the passage was now safe, but I refused to risk it.

‘Come on,’ he said, and leapt down into the stream.

He was almost invisible except for his hand on the pole. What help he would give me I could not imagine, but now, cross I must, and did, with the hand moving along just in front. He came out of the darkness and joined me on the farther bank.

‘You have got wet through,’ was all I could think of.

‘No,’ he said. There was a pause, he hitched his lantern rope, and it seemed the interview was at an end, so I offered a large silver Swiss coin and suggested that if his way led past an inn he should get something hot to drink.

The little man attempted to pat me on the shoulder, but could not reach.

‘My dear sir,’ he said, ‘that is quite superfluous.’ (‘Mein lieber Herr, das ist ganz überflüssig.’)

Somewhat discomfited, I asked him the way and received precise directions. I was to follow his footprints over the snowfield, and up the side of a hill to his house where I should find a path leading into the road. We shook hands, he stepped lightly along the poles and vanished in the shadow of the wood. I was alone in his territory.

His track was before me across a great plain of snow; at last it led to stepping-stones over a shallow stream. So far, good, but on the opposite bank the snow had not been touched; the little man had not crossed the water.

Perhaps something odd had happened, and I was going to find a gingerbread house. It was a moment to recall and doubt Berthelot’s, ‘le monde est aujourd’hui sans mystère.’ In this spirit I sought for and found the track lower down the stream, crossed it at an easier place and was soon trudging up a steep slope where steps had been kicked in the snow.

Presently the track led towards a solitary house built into the side of the hill.

The footprints turned aside, went up the hill, and appeared again on the roof where they stopped at the chimney. When the little man went home to bed he went down the chimney.

There was no other house, no living soul in sight, no one to ask. Silently I put my old friend’s question, ‘Did I stand on the solid rock of science?’

There was nothing to do but find the way to the high road and the inn. Over the coffee and Kirsch I made cautious enquiries—did a very civil little man live in the valley? The hostess recognised the description. Yes, one of two brothers, the other still smaller, very pious and well-to-do farmers. (Sehr fromm und wohlhabend.) Bachelors,

intending some day to marry suitable Mädels, who were regular Churchgoers and endowed with many flocks and herds.

No one in the hotel believed the story until the next day, when I could show the footprints on the roof. Then one lady suggested that I should call on my friend. No, never will I call in that farmyard—he would receive me with perfect civility and grin—probably present me with a brace of cheeses or a pair of goats. Anyhow, he would play the ordinary visitor off the stage. I shall never see Gottfried again, nor shall I ever meet his brother who may be another perfect blend of the Quaker and the Gurkha.

COMMUNITY.

*I leaned from my bedroom window in the deep midnight of night,
And even here at the city's heart was a silence then ;
No sound in garden or street, unfooted and voiceless quite,
Save near at my eave a sob from the one sick sparrow of ten,
And over the stonebound ridged roof-sea the moonlight white
Flooding one breast the more not at peace in the nest of men.*
C. S. SHERRINGTON.

ROME IN 1937.

BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE, BT.

IT is a commonplace to say of any town in these latter days that it is changing rapidly. So far as bricks and mortar are concerned the statement in nine cases out of ten is true, but very often the life of the citizens is much what it has always been if due allowance be made for the improvement in the means of communication. The man who travels by Underground is not for that reason necessarily different from his father who went in a horse-drawn bus. In the case of Rome, on the other hand, the changes have been sweeping and fundamental : all have occurred within living memory, and many within the last two decades.

Rome is a trinity. First there is the Rome of the Republic and of the Empire : then there is the Rome of the Papacy, the latter, to quote Hobbes, 'no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof' : lastly there is Rome, the capital of United Italy, and, under Fascism, well on the way to becoming Imperial once again. Yet there are not three Romes, but one Rome, and every Roman is at least as conscious of his city's past as of its present ; indeed, it would puzzle him to say where the one ended and the other began. The fall of the Western Empire is a prominent event in the history-books, but it is doubtful if it meant much to the contemporary Italian. The occupation of Rome by the troops of General Cadorna in 1870, and by the Fascists fifty-two years later, had a greater immediate effect, but the Rome of Signor Mussolini looks to that of Augustus. She

has taken all her conquerors captive, and the latest is the Duce.

Classical Rome was the quarry of its Papal successor, and the monuments of antiquity were the fortresses of the turbulent nobility in the Middle Ages when a Pope could make the Emperor come to Canossa, but was quite incapable of keeping order in his own capital city. When one reads the story of the internecine strife of Colonna, Orsini, and Savelli, it is to marvel, not that so much was destroyed, but that anything was preserved. It is a matter of congratulation that the mechanism of war was so primitive in its destructiveness. Perhaps, too, the relatively insignificant population prevented spoliation on a large scale. The medieval city contained only 15,000 to 40,000 people, as compared with between one and two millions in the days of the Empire. Even in the last decade of Papal rule houses were not continuous beyond the Piazza Barberini, and the Italian troops in 1870 advanced on the Porta Pia down a country lane, which is now that magnificent avenue, the Via Nomentana. The Rome that was the magnet of Christendom was small and congested, like London under the Tudors and Stuarts, and lived among the ruins of its pagan predecessor.

Since the fall of the Temporal Power there have been two periods of what estate agents delight in terming 'development,' one immediately after that event and the other since the War. On the whole, too, Rome has not fared so badly at the hands of the builder, and the area between the Borghese Gardens and the Villa Savoia need not fear comparison with the residential quarters of London or Paris. Of the business districts one cannot speak so highly, and few streets are as dreary as the Via Nazionale. The Fascist regime has been responsible for many new public buildings,

and the controversy some of them has aroused seems unlikely to die down for many a long year. Futurism in art and Fascism in politics have been closely connected since before the March on Rome, but the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista horrified the most ardent supporters of Signor Mussolini when it made its appearance four years ago. The present writer will not readily forget the wrath of the late Count Cippico on account of a few conventional phrases of approval of its architecture in a newspaper interview.

Nevertheless, the *bizarre* is the exception rather than the rule, and even the gaunt form of the Ministry of Corporations in the Via Vittorio Veneto does not obtrude itself; certainly it in no way mars the majesty of the *palazzo* that was for so long the home of Queen Margherita, the mother of the present King. Rome seems able to assimilate influences to an extent denied to other cities, and this applies to the arts as well as to other aspects of life. In this way the excavations, so prominent a feature of recent years, do not jar the eye, even when they are upon an extensive scale. Perhaps it is that Rome is so old that one instinctively looks in its buildings for evidence of its immortality, and to be convinced it is necessary to see the influence both of the Parthenon and of the Soviets.

At least a passing word of praise is due to those responsible for the present state of the excavations, particularly the *Forum Romanum* and the Palatine. A little more or a little less cleaning up would have spoilt the effect completely, and it is heightened by the entire absence of pay-gates, touting guides, and sellers of post-cards. What a relief it would be if the Greeks would but copy their Italian neighbours in this respect. High above the *Forum Romanum* in the gardens he made and loved is the grave of that great archaeologist Boni, to whom his work was a mission and a

religion rather than a science. To stand there at sunset when the nightingales are beginning to sing, and the Angelus is echoing in the distance, is to learn something of the spirit of Rome. It is one of the few experiences in this too hectic modern world that is not easily forgotten.

Yet Rome, as the young Italians of to-day rightly remind us, is no mere museum. She is the capital of a great nation, while—what is unique—she is the residence of two Heads of States, the King of Italy and the Pope, and of one of the most remarkable men of our time, Benito Mussolini. It is well that such should be the case, for the influence of Rome has a sobering effect upon the enthusiastic young Fascists who flock there from the provinces. Elsewhere they are somewhat inclined to ignore the truth of Burke's saying that 'people will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.' Rome broadens the outlook of the most narrow-minded.

For two generations, that is to say from the unification of Italy in 1870 to the Lateran Treaty of 1929, Roman society was in the main divided between Blacks and Whites, though at this late date it is probably impossible to discover the name of the English diplomat who said that neither appealed to him, as the one was too dull and the other too disreputable. After the Austrians had been expelled from Lombardy, and the dynasties in Central and Southern Italy had been driven from their thrones, many of their supporters took refuge in Rome, which thus became for a brief space a veritable home of lost causes. What the city was like in those days, when the streets were dotted with the soldiers of the Second Empire in their blue coats and red trousers, is well described by Disraeli in *Lothair*. These exiles and those who thought with them had naturally no desire to mix with the triumphant supporters of the new

King, and so the Blacks held themselves aloof. It must be confessed that the Whites deserved a good deal of the criticism levelled against them. Revolutions always bring the scum to the surface, and the *Risorgimento* was no exception. This distinction was further emphasised by the existence of two separate sets of diplomats, one accredited to the Vatican and the other to the Quirinal : this still obtains, and even the present Pope, Pius XI, does not view with favour any fraternisation between the foreign representatives at the Holy See and those at the Italian Court.

Until the death of Pius X the cleavage was complete, and it was deeper than that in England between Whigs and Tories in the reign of Anne. The war began a new orientation into interventionists and non-interventionists, while Fascism introduced a fresh element, and the Lateran Treaty finally removed the last reason for the old feud. To-day it is little more than a memory.

Roman society suffers from having no axis on which it can turn, for the Papacy is less aristocratic than of yore, and the monarchy is decentralised. Few foreign institutions are so completely misunderstood in England as the Italian monarchy, and it is generally assumed to be without importance in its own country. Actually, the Roman attitude towards the King and Queen is very much the same as was that of the Londoner towards King George V and Queen Mary, and for identical reasons. There is probably more ceremony observed on ordinary occasions at the Quirinal than at Buckingham Palace, but when one arrives at King Victor Emmanuel himself it is to find a very charming gentleman, of encyclopædic knowledge and the shrewdest judgment, with a manner that would put the most nervous at their ease. The humanity of the King is one of his most prominent characteristics, and recalls his murdered father,

Humbert the Good. At the time that Naples was experiencing a particularly bad epidemic of cholera, he was invited to be present at a race-meeting at Pordenone, but he excused himself with a telegram containing these words, '*A Pordenone si fa festa, a Napoli si muore; vado a Napoli.*' To Naples he went, and visited the areas most affected with a fearlessness that gained the admiration of even the bitterest opponents of the monarchy. His son is a man of the same stamp. As for the Queen, a few hours spent in the hospitals, clinics, and such-like places are sufficient to prove the love for her which is universal among the working-classes. There is not much entertaining on a large scale at the Quirinal, and the King and Queen spend a considerable part of each year at San Rossore, near Pisa.

The other members of the Royal Family are not ordinarily resident in Rome, and to understand in what the latter differs from London and Paris it is necessary to remember that until yesterday Naples, Florence, and several other towns were the capitals of independent states: they still have a life of their own reminiscent of that of Dublin and Edinburgh in the eighteenth century. The Prince and Princess of Piedmont, and the various cadets of the House of Savoy, reside in palaces in these different centres, and the latter's gain is Rome's loss. Those who know Italy well can testify to the good effects of this practice, which, one sometimes feels, might with advantage be copied in other countries.

Signor Mussolini rarely goes out socially, and then generally to some function at an embassy, but when he does appear he is extraordinarily good company. The members of the inner Fascist ring by no means always follow the self-denying ordinance of the Duce, and they are providing that new blood of which Roman society stood very greatly

in need. There are, too, new hostesses (it would be invidious to mention names) who successfully combine at their parties all that is best in old and new, without eliminating that cosmopolitan influence which has been marked for so long. At the moment this development, like much else in Rome, is but beginning, yet it cannot fail to be beneficial in the long run. Fascism favours youth, and youth is proverbially intolerant. The young party enthusiast from the provinces, promoted to an important post in Rome, is thus brought into contact with points of view other than his own, and his zeal becomes tempered with knowledge. So it was in the days of the Cæsars, and one might cite many an instance from Latin literature of the civilising influence of life in the capital. Out of the hostility of Blacks and Whites, and the creation of a fresh governing class in consequence of the triumph of Fascism, a new society is arising in Rome which may well be the most attractive in Europe, for the city is not too large for people to know one another. Not for nothing is she the centre of the greatest international organisation as well as the capital of Italy.

Home life has a greater hold upon all classes in Rome than in London or Paris, and it is the rule for those employed in offices and shops to go home for their midday meal. The café habit is not so strong as in some other Italian cities, notably Florence and Venice, and it is the exception to entertain at restaurants, save in the case of public functions. In the upper class it is usual to lunch at one-fifteen, but not to dine before eight-thirty, for the law requires that domestic servants must have a certain amount of free time each afternoon. There are not many clubs, but the two leading ones, the Scacchi and the Caccia, can hold their own with anything in Pall Mall and St. James's Street. The former, as its name implies, was originally a chess

club, and was one of the very few clubs allowed by the police in Papal times.

As is well known, no social stigma attaches to those who let off part of their palaces, and this is the custom. A few of these magnificent buildings have been diverted to public use, and a notable instance is the Palazzo Venezia, which is so frequently mentioned in the British Press as the office of Signor Mussolini. It was originally the Venetian embassy to the Holy See, and after the overthrow of the Republic of St. Mark it was put to a similar purpose by the Austrians. When the War came the Italian Government confiscated the building, and after he had been a year or two in office the Duce appropriated it as his official residence, though he does not live there. Just across the Piazza Venezia, at the corner of the Corso Umberto, is the house where Napoleon's mother died, and where, so it is said, a ghostly visitant came one May evening in 1821 to announce the Emperor's death, the news of which did not reach Rome otherwise until some weeks later. Another palace, the Chigi, is now the Italian Foreign Office. The embassies and legations have not, as might have been expected, taken over private houses to anything like the extent that has been the case in post-War London, and in Rome at any rate much of the glamour attaching to them and their occupants is gone. Certainly the days are no more when the whole district adjoining the Spanish embassy in the Piazza di Spagna formed a sanctuary; to the detriment of Roman morals, it may be added, for when pretty ladies were stopped by the Papal *sbirri* for solicitation they pleaded the protection of His Catholic Majesty.

The Roman, except for a few frivolous members of the aristocracy, is a serious individual, and he views life very differently from the light-hearted Tuscan and Neapolitan.

One cannot imagine the traffic of a Roman street being held up while a band of irresponsible young people danced ring-a-ring-o'-roses round an infuriated but helpless policeman on point duty, as has happened more than once in Florence. Nevertheless, the Roman does like his pleasures, and one of them is Ostia, the Margate of the capital, to which it is joined by a motor-road. Indeed, during the hot weather those who can spare the time drive down to Ostia for a bathe in the middle of the day. On the other side of the city are the hills, with such centres of attraction as Tivoli, Albano, and Frascati. The last-named has a special claim on English attention, for it was there that the last of the Stuarts resided for many years. There are still people alive who have spoken with those who saw the ill-fated grandson of James II; as his medal has it, 'Henry IX, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the faith, Cardinal Bishop of Frascati,' and, on the other side, '*Non desiderii hominum, sed voluntate Dei.*' It is to be feared that the Cardinal King would not recognise his beloved Frascati to-day, for, like Richmond, its proximity to an ever-expanding capital has caused it to lose much of its individuality.

The country round Rome has been described so often that any account of it would be out of place here, but it must be observed that the Roman people now make full use of it. Motoring and cycling are growing in popularity every day, and sport of all kinds, for women as well as for men, is encouraged by the regime. The Press seems to carry even more sporting news than it does in England, which is saying a good deal. The new Mussolini Forum provides facilities for all sorts of recreation, and it is well patronised. The poorer classes, too, have the *dopolavoro* organisation, which enables them to make excursions at

reduced rates. For all his seriousness, the Roman manages to get a good deal of fun out of life. Of indoor amusements the cinema is easily the most popular and the most fashionable, while the theatre is not so extensively frequented. The Government is doing everything in its power to assist the Italian cinema industry, and new studios, rivalling those of Hollywood itself, are in process of erection on the road to Frascati.

It cannot be denied that one hears much criticism, not only on the score of economy, of the transformation of Rome during the past ten years. Such avenues as the Via del Impero and the Via Imperiale displaced many streets, some of them picturesque, and all dear to those who had known them from childhood. Yet it is often the foreigner, returned to Rome after a long absence, who most deplors the changes, for aliens have a habit of becoming more Roman than the Romans in the love of the city. In a short time, however, what was there before will have been forgotten, for no building of merit has been demolished. In fact the only justifiable grievance would seem to be that of people whose houses have been pulled down, and who, having been removed to the suburbs, now find that it costs them more to get to and from their work.

On the other hand, there can be nothing but praise for the social work which is everywhere in evidence. Mention has already been made of the *dopolavoro* organisation, but that represents only one aspect of what is being done. What may, broadly speaking, be described as welfare work is carried on under the auspices of the State, but by far the greater part of it is voluntary. There seems to be an idea abroad that Italian hospitals are run by the Church ; but that is not the case, though members of Religious Orders are allowed to look after the sick if they are duly

qualified : they are certainly not given any advantages. Voluntary effort of this type is new to the Italian, particularly to the Italian woman, and there is a good deal of leeway to make up, but the enthusiasm and the skill are there already. In this connection it is extremely satisfactory to note that many English residents are participating in such activities, and it is only right that they should do so. They enjoy all the advantages of residence in Italy, and it is but just that they should shoulder some of the responsibilities.

No account of modern Rome would be complete without some reference to its intellectual life. Here, again, one has to remember that it is not Paris, and the university has not the tradition behind it of Bologna or Padua, but it is easier for an Englishman than for a Frenchman to appreciate this. On the other hand, the Roman undergraduates are an orderly fraternity, which is more than can always be said for their contemporaries elsewhere. The real intellectual centre of the capital is the Reale Accademia d'Italia, of which the Marchese Marconi is President. It is a new body, and was founded on the model of the French Academy, though its sphere of activity is somewhat more extended. It is housed in the beautiful Farnesina Palace, which was originally built by the first member of the famous banking family of Chigi to come to Rome. Once a year there assembles under its auspices the Convegno Volta, when *savants* and statesmen from all over Europe meet to discuss whatever subject has been selected for its deliberations. Society in Rome, unlike that in some modern capitals, is cultured, though the city cannot pretend to the artistic pre-eminence of Florence, nor has it the musical reputation of Milan. As befits its age, however, it takes a catholic interest in all forms of learning and art, if it specialises in none.

Leo XIII is alleged to have told a visitor to Rome that

if the latter stayed a week he would see everything, if a month he would see something, and if a year he would see very little. In the matter of pictures, museums, and monuments that is very true, but the life of Rome takes long to learn, for the city has seen too many strangers in the course of its long history to take them readily to its heart. However, once it does so, it is in no uncertain manner, and those who have once submitted to her spell will agree that Rome is their second home.

CONSCIENCE.

*There is a ghost-voice cries within my heart.
I hear it in the rustling of my dress,
It throbs in every pulse-beat, plays a part
In all my sorrow, all my joyfulness ;
With each new breath its sad persuasions start,
My very shadow trembles with its sound ;
Where secret things are shut its echoes dart—
Nor height nor deep can compass it around !*

*Persistent voice ! A thousand voices thine—
A thousand tongues that blend in tireless plea !
Ah ! give me grace to hearken, thou divine
Importuner who still pursuest me,
And claim me if thou canst, both thought and plan—
In serving thee to serve my fellow-man !*

MARGUERITE JOHANSEN.

BY THE WAY.

To some the beginning of May stands for the end of hunting, the close of that long, wet, cold, energetic, happy season, the passing of which is a joy to others : to these the date marks the time when the daily paper can be opened contentedly at the cricket news first of all. Last year it was Hammond to whom the mind sped at the breakfast-table before the weightier and less absorbing happenings of the world could be digested : who will it be this year ? Hammond again ? To others again the first of May brings to the thought agitations, banners, processions, and speeches : to a fourth section it means the gaiety and social delights of every kind that have won for the months about to unfold the proud simplicity of the title, 'the season.' This year it means to all the Coronation. Yet there is still a fifth section, to whom it will bring remembrance of the opening words of *Piers Plowman* : in vision, if not in reality, they will see themselves 'on Morven hillës.' To those privileged to be in the regions of orchards it is above all the time of apple-blossom : mile after mile their vale is flushed with the supreme beauty of the little pink buds opening out to their pale perfection.

For so many things so contrasted do these first days of real warmth and sunshine stand. They emphasise visibly the old truism that what is one man's meat is another man's poison. They mark the great change-over of the year, the desertion of the fireside and the football field for the open road and the tennis court. And if they bring sighs to some, to others they bring gladness. They make us all realise with peculiar vividness that there is in fact nothing absolute in the world. It is a good thing for us all that every now

and again in our hurrying courses we should be forced to pause and become conscious of a fact which is so true and so ordinary that we live in constant danger of forgetting it—the fact, I mean, that everything that happens has just so many facets as there are minds on which to receive its impressions. There is nothing in existence so important to remember as this which is so commonly ignored. We are perpetually imperilling our happiness and jeopardising the schemes that are dearest to our hearts by the assumption that our view of an event must necessarily be that in which it appears to others. A great man plans a policy and it never crosses his mind that it may well be that those parts of it which have the strongest attraction to him may to others seem its weakness—and in that omission he ceases to be great. A generous man devises a surprise intended to be hailed with enthusiasm, and he is hurt when he hears in the forced thanks that he has been sadly lacking in the power to put himself in the recipient's place. How many things done would have been left undone, how many things left undone would have been done, if only the mysteriously poignant words, 'I didn't think you'd take it like that!' had knocked beforehand on the consciousness!

★ ★ ★

At last we men have something by which we may be guided to the solution of life's greatest problem: a Swede has remarked that as between a dinner jacket and a tail-coat he prefers the latter, as then, in his own words, 'a man feels more feastly-minded.'

★ ★ ★

One way and another, between those who love and study poetry and those who are serenely indifferent to it, the poets are not having a very happy time. From the indifferent nothing is expected; but of late it has been a case of 'save

me from my friends.' Here is an extract from a review, written by one modernist of another, 'it is nonsense, and meant to be : but his use of words is exciting and quite individual, he is constantly producing images of remarkable clarity and evocative power.' Personally, of nonsense-writers I prefer Edward Lear. Soon after I had seen that, I read Mr. Scott James's pronouncement that 'the poets are thinking it their duty to drop poetry and write tracts' : no poet in the world's history has ever thought that, Milton's public services notwithstanding. As a matter of fact the writers specifically referred to are said to be driving ambulances for the Communists in Spain—good luck to them ! And, thirdly, induced by some words of commendation from Professor Lascelles Abercrombie, fine poet and acute critic, I have read *Merry-go-Round : a kind of poem*, by Edward Ellul (Boehringer, ss.). Professor Abercrombie has described this as 'really very delightful' : to me it is really rather sad—a writer of considerable gifts solemnly devoting himself to work that, even on a second reading, remains obstinately without meaning and continually descends to such lines as : 'Not 'alf 'he [*sic*] didn't, not 'alf she don't : not 'alf.' It was not in such ways that the great satirists worked. What is of tragic interest is that it is this kind of thing which to-day gets both attention and praise : either our standards or our vision have gone from us. We gaze at our unrivalled heritage of poets and say, in effect, as the fond mother watching her son's battalion go by said, 'They're all out of step, except our Jock'—and that 'is nonsense, and (perhaps) meant to be.'

★ ★ ★

On the same morning I received, first, a letter from a correspondent resident in a British island in the middle of the Indian Ocean saying, 'My warmest regards always to

the best magazine that the world has thus far seen'—which was very gratifying : and, secondly, a letter from the centre of the United States in which the writer said, ' Although an American for 317 years, the time-old surge of British blood in my veins still pulses responsively.' That is pleasant reading : and has any other periodical in the world a correspondent of such unusual age ?

* * *

What a tiny little dot of land this island of ours is ! Recently I left London at 11.15 a.m., spent over four hours on the Atlantic shore and was back in London before 9 p.m.—and without the use of an aeroplane either. No wonder the visitors now flocking to us are afraid of falling off into the sea !

* * *

Two Irishmen were out in a boat fishing : one of them hooked a big fish but lost it, and time compelled a return home. On the journey the first was bewailing his loss to his friend. ' Never mind, Pat,' replied Seumas consolingly, ' to-morrow we'll come back and then we'll get him.' ' How shall we find the spot ? ' asked Pat in dudgeon. ' Oh, that's easy enough : I marked it at the time by making a cross on the bottom of the boat just above it.' ' But,' objected Pat, ' we may not get the same boat.'

* * *

In this age, when as a rule it is only those who know nothing who are certain, it is refreshing to come on anyone who has both knowledge and certainty. In Sir Charles Petrie's attractively named *Lords of the Inland Sea* (Lovat Dickson, 10s. 6d. n.), or as its more direct sub-title runs *A Study of the Mediterranean Powers*, the European situation is examined in a way that is as absorbingly interesting as it is undeniably provocative. Sir Charles is not at all averse to stating with all the trenchancy at his command

(and that is no small measure) both his likes and his dislikes : in this survey statesmen are either good or bad, never gray (countries also : for example, 'at heart the Italian will never be a militarist, whilst the German will never be anything else'), and this certainty makes for clearness in analysing tendencies and policies. Thus, King Victor Emmanuel and the King of the Hellenes receive unstinted eulogies ; Mussolini is among the greatest statesmen of all time and indeed beyond criticism, Salazar 'has accomplished one of the most remarkable feats of the century'—on the reverse side come Balfour ('whose record of mistakes, save when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland, is unparalleled even in English political history'), Baldwin, Eden, all Russians, particularly Litvinoff, and the League of Nations ('the sooner the League is wound up the better'), and democracy in general ('all republics appeal to the lowest in man'—cf., earlier in the book, 'the French Revolution was one of the greatest disasters that have ever afflicted mankind'). Such pronouncements naturally detract from the impartiality of this investigation—and that is a pity, for it has great value. Sir Charles is at his best in his penetrating analysis of French politics—wherever Italy is concerned, though he can be exceedingly interesting, as in his article on another page of this issue, he is apt in this volume at all events to become uncritical ; on the Abyssinian outrage, for instance, he writes, 'Very few Englishmen wished to do more than make a certain rude gesture at Mussolini, whilst most of them had no desire even to do that'—which is surely completely to misrepresent the strength and sincerity of our national feeling. But, agree or disagree, no reader can fail to be profoundly interested in this very important book ; he will continually be instructed and often, even against his will, impressed and even converted.

Do we, even with all the evidence daily before our eyes, fully recognise the extent of the changes which have been, and are, sweeping across the world to-day? We accept the transformations wrought upon us by the motor-car, the cinema, and the wireless, but do we also understand what transformations these—and other similar mechanical and scientific inventions—have wrought upon others? It has always been supposed, for instance, that the East was ‘immemorably’ unchanging; that idea can no longer be sustained. It is only necessary to read Lilo Linke’s new book to be certain of that. Lilo Linke is—like Freya Stark, to whose indomitable spirit hers bears comparison—a confirmed believer in solitary travel for girls in uncouth places: now after two important books, one on France and the other on Germany, she has wandered alone through the length and breadth of modern Turkey: her title *Allah Dethroned* (Constable, 15s. n.) is not particularly happy—little other criticism can be passed on a book that is throughout of quite unusual interest and attraction. For all who really want to know the story of the astounding transformation that is Turkey, told with great vivacity, here is their book.

★ ★ ★

Those who like to read about the excessively primitive will find their tastes admirably catered for in Julian A. Weston’s *The Cactus Eaters* (Witherby, 10s. 6d. n.). Few have heard of the wild Goajira Indians, and far fewer have ever penetrated into that prickly, arid corner of the world on the borders of Columbia and Venezuela in which they eke out a poverty-stricken and futureless existence. It is proved possible to write with simplicity a book full of description of them and to entertain as well as instruct. And to folk-lore the volume is a valuable addition.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 163.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach the Editor by 29th May.

'Now slides the ——— on, and leaves
A shining furrow,'

1. 'She shut the cold out and the ———
And kneel'd and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm ;'
2. 'Through the clear windows of the morning, turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western ———,'
3. 'For some we loved, the ——— and the best'
4. 'Obey thy heart ;
Friends, kindred, days,
———, good fame'
5. 'There is a silence where ——— sound may be,'
6. 'The Kings of Ind ——— jewel-sceptres vail
And from their treasures scatter pearlèd hail ;'

Answer to Acrostic 161, March number : 'Of the *world* for ever, it seems' (Arthur O'Shaughnessy : Ode). 1. WalkS (Alice Meynell : 'The Lady of the Lambs'). 2. OpiatE (Keats : 'Ode to a Nightingale'). 3. RepinE (Landon : 'Resignation'). 4. LooM (Tennyson : 'The Lady of Shalott'). 5. DreamS (Beddoes : 'Dream Pedlary').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Sinclair, St. Clements, Paignton, and Miss Jean D. Gowans, 60 Craig Park, Glasgow, E.1, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

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*The King and Queen of England's ancient growth,
By the twin rights of blood and service placed,
Pass with the world's acclaim to crown and oath,
And loyalty and love are interlaced.*

G.

AN ECHO OF CAWNPORE: JUNE, 1857.

BY MAUD DIVER.

*Kill or be killed, live or die, they shall know we are soldiers and men ;
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave flinging forward again . . .
Praise to our Indian brothers ; let the dark face have its due !
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with us, faithful and true . . .
Men will forget what we suffer, and not what we do.*

—TENNYSON.

I.

EIGHTY years ago : another India, another England, barely recognisable to modern eyes. In that dread summer of 1857, the treachery and after-horrors of Cawnpore were fresh in the minds of British men and women. To the present generation, the tragedy, if known at all, survives as a dim and distant nightmare, best forgotten. Yet to-day there hangs in a Somerset country house one of the few remaining relics of that terrible time ; a faded letter framed in double glass—so that all may be read—written by the owner's grandmother, Mrs. Larkins, on the 9th of June, four days after the actual siege had begun. It was addressed to her husband's sister, then in charge of four elder children at home ; three younger ones being still in India with her

and her husband, Major George Larkins, who commanded a battery of Bengal Artillery.

‘ I write this, dearest Henrietta, in the belief that our time of departure is come. The whole of the troops rose here, and we took refuge in a barrack. We are so hemmed in by over powering numbers, that there seems no hope of escape. Only about forty European soldiers are left out of a hundred and twenty men, a sad number to hold out against such an awful enemy. They have six guns against us ; the walls are going. This is an awful hour, my darling Henrietta ; Jessie Emily and George cling to us. Dearest George has been well, up till to-day, out day and night ; but he is now, I grieve to say, obliged to abandon his post. Many brave men have fallen to-day. The siege has lasted four days ! Let this be a warning to your Government never again to place British officers and men in such a pitiable position ; only a hundred and twenty European soldiers at Cawnpore. It is sad and painful to reflect that our lives are to be sacrificed in such a condition. Give my love to my sweet girls . . . we leave them all in the hands of God and your tender watching. My dear love to all my friends. We hope to meet, and part no more, where we shall serve our God without weariness. . . . Peace, dearest Henrietta, that passeth knowledge, be with you. My gratitude to you is unbounded. I have given this to Uluma (ayah) who wishes to escape. . . . ’

A curious coincidence—presently to be told—attaches to that brave yet pitiful letter, one of the last that left the doomed cantonments, to reach England nearly two years after all was over—a veritable voice from the dead.

Only a month earlier Mrs. Larkins was writing cheerfully of trivial family affairs to a brother at home :

‘ We have good tidings of our three little girls with their kind Aunt, who has just changed her residence and come close to London,

to a very gay neighbourhood—Alexandra Park, Esher . . . I have, thank God, a good account to give of my dearest one. He commands the Cawnpore Artillery division. Disaffection among the sepoy's here called forth his abilities and caused a handsome report to be sent to the Commander in Chief. . . . If health be granted us, we ought ere long to be rich. . . . But it is wonderful to notice how an officer's expenses increase with rank. The other day a regimental bill came for Rs.1400 ; and a few days after, for Rs.800 ! I was quite astonished.'

Increasing astonishment, sharpened by terror and torment, was to be her portion before that fatal month was out.

Possibly no single officer in Cawnpore would have believed in the fire that smouldered under the sullen rumble of 'disaffection,' though one had risen from the dead to foretell their impending doom. Only a few far-sighted men, like Sir Henry Lawrence, had long foreseen the inevitable outcome of discipline dangerously relaxed, of too many officers exchanging regimental duty for the more promising fields of staff and political employ, too many British regiments despatched to Persia and the Crimea, though their presence had never been more urgently needed in India. For the whole Bengal army was seething with incipient Mutiny, with a spirit of arrogance quickened by an increasing sense of its power. The sepoy's, at that time, outnumbered British soldiers by ten to one—and they knew it ; knew that the bulk of their own white officers believed in them, as a father believes in his children. They themselves believed that by a concerted rising and wholesale massacre they might succeed in almost exterminating the accursed race, and freeing India from British rule : a belief that accounted for much murderous slaughter even of women and children, normally safe from molestation in the East.

In that fateful spring of 1857 the air was full of vague portents and misgivings, a sense of insecurity more unnerving than obvious danger. Among Indians there was talk of a prophecy that the hundredth year after Clive's decisive victory at Plassey would bring about another marked change in India's history—as in truth it did, though not in the way they desired and dreamed. Far and wide, the word went forth that the Brahmin army must arise and slay and rule the land, or they would all be converted by violence into Christians and slaves. From village to village, from hand to hand passed the mysterious *chupattis*, signifying trouble to come. Now it would be a couple of fakirs, now a gang of gypsies, or a string of camel drivers: all bearing the same fateful message: 'The end is at hand.'

Yet even in early May—a week before the first horrors and blunders at Meerut—the word 'Mutiny' had scarcely been breathed at Cawnpore.

A large, important military and civil station, it sprawled along the south bank of the Ganges; its population of whites and half-whites numbering more than a thousand souls; its garrison composed of three sepoy Infantry regiments, one of Native cavalry and a company of artillery; a force of three thousand men, amounting—though they knew it not—to three thousand potential foes. Of British troops, not even a battalion to balance that dangerous disproportion. There were but three hundred white soldiers from different units; eighty of them invalids from the 32nd Regiment, at Lucknow.

Probably the disproportion troubled few, if any, officers of the garrison, certainly not General Sir Hugh Wheeler, in whose eyes the three thousand were as stanch as the three hundred, though individually the British soldier might be the better man. Untroubled by any whisper of impending doom, that isolated community was immersed in the normal

round of Indian social life; everyone meeting everyone daily at the Club, on the racecourse, or round the inevitable bandstand—the up-country centre of fashion. There were the usual dances and dinners and ambling drives along roads ankle-deep in dust, with the eternal variant of love-making to mitigate the boredom of gossip and gambling.

And all the while none guessed how, night after night, the sepoy squatted in their mud-built lines, discussing, over the evening *hookah*, their part in the programme of the great rising. A change of tone in the servants was noticed by a few. The cook, if reprov'd, would be sulky or insolent; the *bhisti* 'forgot' to fill the bath, the butler to ice the Moselle. The bearer would sit smoking near the open drawing-room door, or come into 'the Presence' bare-headed when the Sahib and his horse-whip were safe out of the way. The English, at that time, were apt to despise their servants, to whom so many afterwards owed their lives, while they implicitly believed in the sepoy, who were plotting their extermination. Nor did even the shrewdest suspect the secret animosity hidden behind the smiling mask of Cawnpore's local Maharajah, destined to become known throughout India and England as the execrated Nana Sahib, evil genius of the siege, treachery and massacre—the most dastardly in British Indian annals.

By name Sarik Dandu Punt, he was but one among the many disgruntled chiefs and princes who had been scattered throughout India by the British policy of annexation, so vigorously pursued by Lord Dalhousie that it became associated with his name. The Nana's personal grievance had sprung from his adoption by a certain Mahratta chief, who had been plausibly banished from his kingdom, pensioned off with a trifle of 80,000 a year and lodged in a princely palace at Bithur on the Ganges, twelve miles above Cawn-

pore. Lacking an heir to inherit his wealth, and perform the funeral offices for his soul, he had resorted to the recognised Hindu practice of adoption ; the chosen heir being entitled to all rights and privileges of a legitimate son. But when Dandu Punt claimed as his right a continuance of his father's pension, the claim was disallowed both by Lord Dalhousie and the East India Company. Between them, they had planted in his heart a seed of bitter resentment, that was to bear terrible fruit, in due season.

To the Cawnpore garrison, ignorant of his grievance, he seemed a friendly young prince, generous, hospitable and well favoured, though already cumbered with the unhealthy corpulence of one who hardly ever walked a yard except from his divan to his bath or his food. His stables full of horses, camels and elephants were at their service. In his banqueting hall, gay with mirrors and chandeliers, he would give balls and dinners in English style. He played an excellent game of billiards ; gave hunting parties for the men, picnics and costly shawls to the ladies. If a subaltern's wife needed change of air, a royal carriage and palace apartments would be offered to the young pair. If a civilian had overworked himself, elephants and beaters would be supplied for a spell of sport in the jungle. Yet behind the smiling mask lurked his undying grudge against the British nation that had disallowed his just claim. ' From the hour of his repulse to the hour of vengeance, his life was one long irony.'

And by now he must have seen, if his unsuspecting friends did not, that the time was at hand.

Early in May, the English at Cawnpore had begun to feel uneasy over disturbing news from Agra. Something more than disturbing seemed to have happened at Meerut. Guns had been heard through the night of the 10th and there were startling rumours from Delhi. Travellers, expected from the

north-west, failed to arrive. And all the while it was known in the city and the bazaar, through secret channels, that at Meerut the 3rd. Light Cavalry had refused to bite the new greased cartridges, and had turned on their officers; that murder and arson were the order of the day, that the whole native garrison at Delhi—where not even a British company was quartered—had risen *en masse*, had butchered every white man, woman and child on whom they could lay hands. By the 19th, news of the worst was common knowledge in Cawnpore cantonments; and Mrs. Larkins was writing Home:

'We are in your thoughts no doubt, at these critical times, and I am thankful to have the power of telling you that here peace has been preserved, although the Sepoys have been ready to rise for the last three weeks on the slightest provocation. Only through good and prudent management have they been kept quiet.'

'General Anson (Commander in Chief) is now forced from the hills, and is marching with three Regiments of Europeans to recapture Delhi: have there ever been such blunderings heard of? It is a merciful thing for the country that there are a few heads at different stations who can rule the men.'

'Our poor neighbours at Meerut and Delhi! Nothing is known authentic, except the murder of Simon Fraser, Mr. and Miss Jennings, Dr. Balfour, Captain Douglas of the Palace Guard, and many others whose names I know not. The poor bodies were stripped and thrown out on the streets of the city, and exposed till night, when their servants crept out and hid them from view. The Insurgents are now in the Fort with thirty lacs of rupees and possession of the powder magazine; the other, Mr. Willoughby blew up, and it is feared blew himself up also.'

'Six Sowars on horses passed through here yesterday, and said they met ladies and gentlemen and children flying from Delhi, some

even on foot. The rebels threw down the bridge over the Jumna, and have completely cut off their own retreat when attacked.

'The rebellion began with the 3rd Native Cavalry, eighty-three of whom refused the suspected cartridges, were tried by Native Officers, and sentenced to ten years in irons on the roads. They were sent off to jail under an European escort and left to the care of the usual guard. In the evening the whole Regiment rose, broke open the jail, and were joined by every Native Infantry Regiment at Meerut; burnt and plundered every bungalow in their lines; killed every European they could find. . . .

'There is a great outcry against the blunders of General Anson and Lord Canning. . . . Our present directors have need of wisdom, and if I had anything to say to the safety of India, I would allow these two gentlemen to eat their native air till they learnt more. The whole calamity is attributable to clumsy blundering. How distressing to know of these dear lives sacrificed; and nothing can redeem them.'

Yet that was but the beginning of sorrows.

II.

Not so, thought General Sir Hugh Wheeler, a veteran of seventy-five, who had spent fifty years in the country, and had married a high-caste Indian lady, worshipped his sepoy and would believe no ill of them.

'All well at Cawnpore,' he wired to Government on the 18th. 'But excitement continues among the people. The final advance on Delhi will soon be made. . . . Calm and expert policy will reassure the public mind. The plague is, in truth, stayed.'

Lord Canning—unfairly censured—knew better than his optimistic General. Sir Henry Lawrence—only forty miles off at Lucknow—could have told a different tale; had, in

fact, already sent an urgent message begging Wheeler to put no trust in the Nana Sahib. But none can save the self-doomed. Sir Hugh had already asked his Rajah friend for military help, when sudden trouble with the 2nd Native Cavalry proved, even to him, that 'the plague' was far from stayed. In Cawnpore it had not yet begun.

The Nana's troops, when they arrived, were placed on guard over the British Treasury containing £100,000. It was even suggested that the women and children be sent for sanctuary (save the mark !) to his palace at Bithur. But English husbands vetoed the crazy plan. Instead, all were herded together in the disused Dragoon hospital: two large single-storey buildings, that were to be prepared for defence in case the troops gave more trouble. Yet there, ready to hand, was the Arsenal, an immense walled enclosure, well stocked with guns and ammunition, and protected in the rear by the Ganges.

Blindly Wheeler chose two empty buildings, one of them fatally thatched, set in the open plain. Round them he built a mere mud wall four feet high by three feet thick; and his precious store of provisions was enclosed by 'a fence not high enough to keep out an active cow.' What younger officers, with better heads on their shoulders, thought of these ineffective preparations can only be imagined, since no record remains beyond the apt comment of an Indian lawyer, whose written account survived the final disaster. 'The Sahibs did the reverse of wisdom. . . . They put a sword into the enemy's hands and thrust their own heads forward.'

It was on the 5th of June—a burning, breathless night in the worst month of India's fiery furnace—that three pistol-shots and the flare of a huge conflagration startled the whole garrison into the knowledge that their hour had come.

Soon all was terror and confusion : bungalows blazing, the cavalry treasure chest seized. The flame of mutiny, once alight, spread fast and far. Three Native Infantry regiments followed the cavalry. Only a company of Gunners remained staunch to their guns.

At dawn on the 6th, Nana Sahib sent a letter to his ' friend ' the General announcing an immediate attack in force on that futile entrenchment, its two buildings packed with women and children, who should long since have been transferred to Allahabad. Now the whole garrison must hasten to join them at an hour's notice : a thousand of them, all told, packed into accommodation designed for two hundred. Though half of them were men of every age and profession, only a hundred and twenty were British soldiers, not counting a few stray officers, whose sepoy had absconded—be it observed—without shooting them down. The remaining five hundred were women and children of all grades.

No time was there for packing, for collecting personal treasures. They were lucky who had time even to dress. ' Half clad, unbreakfasted, confused and breathless, they huddled, like shipwrecked seafarers, within the fatal earth-works, which they entered only to suffer, and left only to die.'

Few could then have believed in the possibility of that mixed and feeble company holding their own for three weeks against overwhelming odds ; against the hourly torment of fierce heat—120° to 135° in the shade ; against thirst and dust and flies, as thick as any plague of Egypt, crawling over them, their food, their faces, their undressed wounds. Needless to say they died or were killed by the score ; yet all too many survived for the cruellest fate of all.

By noon on June the 7th, their feeble entrenchment was completely surrounded, raked by twenty-four-pound shot

from every point of the compass. From roofs and windows of neighbouring houses, crammed with sepoy, poured a harassing hail of bullets. Before the third evening, cannon and musketry between them had shattered all their doors and windows, their few screens and barricades of piled-up furniture. Shell and ball ranged through the naked rooms. Women and children were shot down or crushed to death, while the men, unable to protect them, carried on their unequal struggle, with small respite day or night against huge battering guns and mortars amply served from the British Arsenal so generously given into their hands.

It was at this time that Mrs. Larkins wrote her last brave letter ; but the ayah, it seems, either could not or would not make her escape at once ; clinging no doubt to her mistress as did many faithful native servants, to their everlasting credit. Unhappily, either through panic or prejudice, most of them were ill-repaid for their devotion.

Night and day enemy fire ceased not ; and the fire of the June sun killed almost as many as did the round shot that raked the wretched earthworks, crashed through windows, or bullets that pattered on the walls like hail. Five desperate calls for help General Wheeler despatched to Allahabad. None appear to have arrived. Two letters reached Lucknow. But there also mutiny had flared up ; and in any case no troops could now reach Cawnpore. For the Ganges flowed between ; and the bridge of boats had been destroyed. By hook or crook, under the triple tyranny of ball, bomb and bullet, they must endure to the inevitable end——

On the 8th evening there befell the major calamity all had dreaded and vainly tried to avert by placing bricks and tiles, at immense risk, over the fatal thatched roof of the large bungalow used chiefly for women and children and wounded men. But now, at last, the enemy succeeded in firing it,

by hurling on to it the blazing carcase of a dead animal. Dry thatch and rafters burnt like tow. The whole building was soon a very inferno : roar of flames, whistle of bullets, shrieks of the sufferers, few of whom could be saved for all the selfless courage of officers and men.

Those few hours of horror deprived two hundred women and children of roof overhead and floor underfoot. By night they lay defenceless, huddled in the open ; by day they were exposed, bare-headed, to the pitiless sun. Any attempt at rough shelter built for them was promptly seen and destroyed by a jubilant foe. Yet they were fortunate who died then—and not afterwards.

By that time, Colonel Larkins had been killed ; and it must have been now that the faithful ayah begged Mrs. Larkins and her three children to seek a measure of safety, if not comfort, in her own poor mud hut. And there they stayed with those simple kindly folk, while the dwindling remnant of fighting men—heroes, without a thought of the heroic—continued to hold at bay the Nana and his increasing horde of mutineers.

III.

On June the 23rd—anniversary of Plassey—the Nana resolved to deal a final smashing blow at these pestilential, undefeatable English who were killed and killed daily, yet persisted in fighting on. The cavalry troopers, on that day of shameful memory, bound themselves by a solemn oath, to conquer or perish : and indeed none doubted the issue.

But the British also had the same anniversary to keep, in their own fashion, fired by the spirit of Captain Moore—the unknown hero of an epic siege that has been overshadowed by the horrors that came after.

It was a terrific attack at all points : here the troopers

advancing at full gallop ; there a dense array of infantry masked by skirmishers with bullet-proof bales of cotton-wool, backed by teams of artillery well served with ammunition. Yet, for all their number, and their fury, they did not prevail.

The English shot down their teams and spiked their guns ; fired the bales of wool, hurled back the sharp-shooters and ‘ sent those dense columns to the right about with unseemly haste.’ They taught the troopers of the 2nd Cavalry that their own broken vows and angered gods were ‘ less terrible than British valour in the last extremity.’

After that ignominious repulse, that tragic victory, nothing would induce the sepoys to face another encounter with those devils of Sahib-lōg, who daily fought with increased gallantry, while they—who had looked for easy conquest and slaughter—now became a prey to disaffection and disgust.

The Nana Sahib himself—perceiving their changed spirit and alive to the peril of delay—resolved to alter his own tactics ; where he could not frighten to cajole, to ensnare those whom he could not defeat. With plausible guile, he announced his offer of safe conduct to Allahabad ‘ for all who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie.’

That curt, impudent proclamation involved a cruelly difficult decision for the unbeaten, who knew themselves virtually beaten by forces more irresistible than shot or shell. Had all been soldiers, they would, without question, have fought on to the end, sooner than stipulate with their own sepoys for the privilege of slinking away to safety. Cumbered, as they were, with women and children and many wounded, discretion—or indiscretion—seemed the better part of valour, even to soldierly-minded Captain Moore, of whom it is written that ‘ wherever he passed, he left men something more courageous, and women something less

unhappy.' They knew that the first downpour of the delayed monsoon would reduce their wretched entrenchment to a morass of mud. They had no more ammunition, no medicines or instruments. They had, in fact, no choice. And they could not know that Havelock, urged by Lawrence, was at last bringing troops and guns to their aid.

. So they signed the hateful paper—the death-warrant of that mixed multitude, in which there was a woman and a child for every man, and every other man prostrate with wounds or disease.

And there was Mrs. Larkins, safe in her ayah's hut, beseeched by the devoted pair to remain with them in hiding till escape might be possible. The Nana, they declared, would keep no promises. She would be safer with them. At first she hesitated, because of her children: but in the end she did not dare to remain—the only white woman left in Cawnpore. Go with her own people she must, for all Uluma's prayers and tears. To the faithful woman she entrusted a letter for her brother—then Governor of Bombay, also a ring that would be known as her property. Then she went out to join those fated ones who—in sheer relief from shot and shell—could not choose to hope against hope.

'No prayer was said, no blessing invoked . . . before that inauspicious exodus.' Formally conducted, they were marched down to the Sutti Chowra landing-place, on the Ganges—the few that could march. The rest went in doolies or on gaily painted elephants, with gilded tusks.

And among the crowd of sepoys in ambush, watching their victims-to-be, one said to another: 'They are taken from their fortress grandly. They go gladly. They know not what is before them.'

All too soon they knew.

When at last the waiting boats were packed, and safety

seemed assured, a terrific fusillade broke out from buildings and bushes and the ravine that ran down to the river ; while Havelock was marching to their rescue, and Lawrence was despatching his last appeal to accept no terms from the Nana Sahib.

Among those killed or drowned in that fiendish onslaught were Mrs. Larkins and her children : and one who wrote of it long after to her granddaughter, added—‘ I hope you will feel it was better than the well.’

IV.

Not till fifty-seven years after, by a curious coincidence, did her son and daughters in England learn the full story of that letter and of the devoted ayah, who risked all to carry her message—and was dismissed unheard.

Once again it was June, 1914—another fateful summer—when one of the daughters let her house to a family home on leave from India, lately stationed at Cawnpore. There in the library hung that sorrowful letter framed in double glass ; and the stranger, reading it with interest, remembered how her ayah—a native of Cawnpore—had told a tale of her own father and mother having sheltered an English lady and three children in ‘ the year of the Great Trouble,’ till all went out to be killed. She herself—a girl of sixteen at the time—could remember fragments of those tragic events : and so it befell that her mistress, leasing a house from a stranger, was able to reveal the fate of that tragic lady to those who loved her. More : when the family returned to India, they sought and found their former ayah ; and it was through her they learnt how Uluma—faithful to her trust—had worked her way through many dangers from Cawnpore to the door of Government House, Bombay ; had begged the Red Coated

Splendour, Chuprassi-in-Chief, to grant her an interview with the Burra Sahib, as she had an important letter to deliver and a tale to tell. But those were days when race-hatred and suspicion led to much deplorable cruelty and injustice. The Burra Sahib refused to admit an unauthorised stranger, whose tale might be a fable to cloak some murderous design. So the brave woman, turned away, could only leave her letter for the Great One and call God to witness that she had obeyed her beloved Memsahib's last request.

When the Great One read that letter, he was filled with dismay at having lost trace of her who alone could tell him how and where his sister had perished. All his efforts to find her proved unavailing. The spurned ayah had vanished as completely as a cup of water emptied into the sea.

It remained for her own daughter and a brother, still living, to enlighten the son and daughters of her loved mistress fifty-seven years after ; to assure them that Mrs. Larkins and her children, killed at the ghat, had at least been spared the awful three weeks of waiting with those who were held as prisoners till the very day of Havelock's coming : had been spared the final hideous butchery—and the well.

DARK HORSES.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

[At Merton Magna, in East Devon, live Richard Challice, wheelwright, Ivy, his wife, Leonard, Samson, and Linda, his children, and Verity, his old mother. Simon Pye, friendly, retired neighbour, engages Richard to look after his orchard and Linda as maidservant: he makes friends with the Challices and gives Richard his dream, a piece of land on which is a disused lime-kiln. Simon's son, Gerald, visits his father and sets his snares for Linda.]

VII.

TWO TALKS.

GERALD received his money along with another lecture and was duly grateful for it. He had puzzled his parent of late, for Simon guessed that the young man's enthusiasm for the country was not genuine and expected him to find reasons why he must now speedily return to his own life. As yet he had no inkling of the truth; but he was not difficult to deceive, and though he doubted most of his son's sentiments and opinions, he believed in his alleged indifference to women. Gerald lived a hard, active, clean life and there was no outward sign of certain inner preoccupations.

The problem for Gerald was to see enough of Linda, and that he might do so, he now materially advanced their friendship. He knew that she was deeply interested in him and welcomed his attention; but need for secrecy still existed and he proceeded swiftly but delicately to learn whether she was prepared to share a secret with him. He sounded her, hinted at his desire for a talk, but declared that he should quite understand if she did not wish it. But she

was convinced ere now of his integrity, and her growing emotions in his presence all united to assure her that she was safe enough. He had more than once deprecated their brief chats and joked about the impossibility of getting a good talk and telling her about himself. When therefore he suggested the possibility of a private walk, anywhere she might like to take him, Linda was pleased at such a compliment and made no mystery about it.

On her afternoon out she dressed in her best, met Gerald at Withy Platt Bridge and strolled into the sheltering arms of the old willows that made a jungle beside the river. Now he had a free hand, listened to Linda's interests and expatiated on his own solitary life. He found that she was not oncoming though sympathetic. She contrived to let it be understood that he was paying her a great compliment. She said that her people would much appreciate his friendly act and made it clear that she intended to tell them how she had spent her afternoon. He did not attempt to alter this resolve at once, but spoke of her parents with warm regard, and gathered how her father was all in all to Linda. He perceived that she did not allow her imagination to run riot, or that she expected anything to hang upon this private meeting; but he knew by a dozen unconscious signs that she delighted in his attention and found him already an addition to life. He insisted on his respect for women, in a way that no man troubles to do who really feels respect; but from that point, feeling her to be receptive, he edged into the personal. Thus far, during their fitful intercourse, Linda had not discovered any sign that the young man felt the least personal interest in her, and that fact had made her less illusive than otherwise she might have been; but he had no mind to let the present opportunity pass without changing this attitude and opening her eyes. His purpose

was to establish a new relation which would enable him to see her oftener and create a secret understanding. He knew not as yet whether she was prepared to grant as much, but took the risk, building his hope on the signs that she had given of his attraction. He had taken a like line before and proved successful.

They sat on a fallen tree in complete seclusion presently and Gerald spoke.

‘A man will drift along, Linda, without any thought of a future home and a loving woman to share it with him, until, some fine day, appears a woman to remind him of what he is missing. She may not be the woman he wants ; but there’s probably something about her to make him feel what an unfinished thing he is all alone. Other women don’t waken this sense of loss and mean nothing to him. He may hate them and they may have just the opposite effect upon his mind and make him thank his stars he’s a bachelor ; but a certain sort of woman, if she flashes into his life, wakes all the best and finest feelings in him and reminds him of what a perfect thing a happy, united married life can be. I suppose every girl thinks of marriage, too, sometimes :’

‘I suppose they do, Mr. Pye. You can’t help thinking about it, because marriage is always under your eyes,’ she answered. ‘Half the people you know are married ; but you go in doubt, because you see a lot happy and contented and a lot that are neither.’

‘The criterion of success or failure is the foundation,’ he said. ‘If the marriage was built on true, high-minded love, Linda, then it will last and be a triumph ; but if that wasn’t there, you get a crash. There must be love—the real thing—to keep it sound and equal to any shock. And, as I say, you come across a woman sometimes who seems to tell you what

the meaning of real love must be. And I dare say a girl will come across a man sometimes who seems to help her to see it too.'

'It might be like that between some people,' she admitted.

He meandered upon this theme and, finding her interested, returned to the starting-point.

'Now I'll make a confession,' he said. 'I dare say when I began, you wondered if I was merely stating a theory, or telling you a personal experience; and the answer to that is, I discovered it by personal experience. I know nothing about women and had never even thought of a wife who would care to share my busy existence until just that thing happened and I came across a woman who woke up the beauty of such a happening. I hadn't known her twenty-four hours before she seemed to have opened a window in my poor wits, drawn up a blind and shown me what a precious lot I was missing.'

They sat side by side as he spoke and Gerald made a good deal of play with his eyes and his voice; but he lifted not a finger in her direction and preserved his exalted attitude. Linda did not know what to say when he had finished and made no enquiry as to the source of his new inspirations, as he hoped she might. He designed that the answer to her inevitable question should advance his quest and launch him into deep water, but she did not put the question and he was surprised and put it for her. Thus, however, it lost something of its value.

'You'll ask me who it was that did those wonderful things for me, Linda,' he proceeded as she was silent; but then she did speak and indicated the gulf that she regarded as separating them. He felt it tiresome of her, for it indicated to Gerald how little way he had as yet made.

'I shouldn't think of asking such a question, Mr. Pye.

Nobody would have a right even in your own class of life, let alone out of it.'

He laughed and his passing vexation vanished, for here, was ample material.

'As to class, there's no such thing as class in love, Linda. I don't know much about love, but I do know that much. Love makes the thought of class simply vulgar. A paltry, generally ridiculous distinction, like class distinction, simply can't exist in the atmosphere of real love. Love moves on a plane of its own and flies with wings of its own. It is a magic like no other magic. It melts away every twopenny-halfpenny barrier that our absurd conventions may seek to lift. It's a rainbow that turns all it touches into beauty. I'm sure that must be the real, living truth about love.'

Linda was impressed.

'That's poetry, I expect,' she said.

'And poetry is the highest form of truth,' he told her. 'Great poetry is the nearest to truth we can get, Linda, and—another queer thing—though I never had much use for poetry, or gave it a thought, yet when that woman drew up the blind as I tell you, I felt that you can't have love without poetry. You may not know it's poetry, but you feel a lot of things you don't understand, and some day you will probably see for yourself that love is poetry and makes you live poetry, though you never read, or wrote it.'

'That's too deep for me,' said Linda.

'Only because you haven't loved a man yet. And now I'll tell you what you wouldn't ask to know. But not if I'm boring you?'

'How would it matter to me, Mr. Pye, what woman made you happier in this queer fashion?' she asked. 'But of course, I'm glad if you're glad.'

'It will matter to you—it simply must matter to you,

Linda. I should never have bothered you and talked about my humble self in this egotistical way, if I had thought it didn't matter to you.'

On this avowal he fell silent and looked at her. She was a little agitated and her colour had risen.

'Just because you were the woman—you, Linda. I came here full of my own affairs and dead to everything else. I came, because it was high time I saw the governor and found out if he was happy in his new home. I came with no more thought of this tremendous new experience than of any other new experience. And what happened? This amazing reward for doing my duty! Duty doesn't often get rewarded like that, I'll swear.'

The girl was moved, but she kept her nerve and regretted to hear her voice unsteady.

'Moonshine I'd say, Mr. Pye. You fancied it all.'

'No, no—a man doesn't fancy such things, or invent them. It's the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land, Linda. It's something to be eternally thankful for and grateful for. I may never meet a woman again to waken such a dream, and little likely a woman on such a pattern would care about a commonplace chap like me; but it was a dream worth having and I'm the better for it. And I shall always thank you as long as I live.'

She did not respond and he felt that he had gone far enough. It was too soon to tell her he loved her; but it was not too soon to suggest a further opportunity of meeting without interruption. He simulated an ingenuous gratitude and left the future open, but he learned a good deal during the desultory conversation that followed and knew that she was losing her heart to him, though as yet she hardly knew it herself. He struck the humble note and begged presently for a further meeting. Once he had made her love him,

meetings would be easy enough ; for the present he merely indicated a natural desire, as following the result of her effect upon him.

‘ It’s infernally selfish,’ he began, ‘ but if you’ve had something to enrich your understanding of life and its possibilities, Linda, then you get greedy for more. But I know my place all right and don’t want to make any claim on your precious time. It may belong to somebody very much more important in your scheme of things than I am. Still, I ask for just one more precious talk if you see your way to grant it. And I’d like it to be private. I’d like you to keep what you have done for me all to yourself—at any rate till we’ve had one more little talk together. Is that asking too much ? If it is, I won’t ask again.’

Ethelinda did not think it was asking too much.

‘ How long are you going to stop, Mr. Pye ? ’ she said.

‘ Depends on you. If you can’t give me the light of your countenance just once again, I shall be thankful for past blessings and clear out. If you can be generous, Linda, then I shall stop for the appointed day.’

‘ I’ll think what’s best,’ she promised.

‘ And don’t call me “ Mr. Pye ” again,’ he begged, assuming a lighter manner as they rose to return. ‘ It’s an absurd name anyway. Just let me be “ Gerald ” as I am to your brothers. I made them friends, because they were your brothers. But I’ll call you “ Miss Challice ” if you prefer I should. Challice is a beautiful name—so’s Ethelinda for that matter—a grand old English name.’

He chattered, made her laugh and told her amusing anecdotes from his life. Sometimes he struck a serious note, but did not return to the emotional experiences declared to be awakened by Linda.

At Withy Platt Bridge he left her.

‘Forgive me if I don’t come back with you,’ he said ; ‘but you’ve given me a lot to think about and I want to take my thinking neat and not dilute it with everyday matters, or my dear father’s wisdom for the present. He’s a fine old chap, but sometimes his outlook on life is a little drab and dreary. He thinks the world of you and your father though, and you’ve both done him a lot of good to my certain knowledge.’

‘Mr. Pye and grandmother are got to be great friends,’ said Linda. ‘He likes her old sayings and forgotten tales.’

‘He told me he’d come to feel very deep friendship to your family, and that you were all very good to him.’

‘It’s him that’s good to us,’ she answered. ‘It was always the dream of Father’s life to have a plot of land for his very own ; but he never could reach to land, of course. Then Mr. Pye made the dream come true.’

‘And got quite as much pleasure out of it as ever your father did. The dreams that come true are not often the good dreams, Linda. But when you’re young you can sometimes put your trust in them. Life would be dull going without its dreams.’

He left her then rather abruptly, smiled, shook hands crisply, without any clinging or squeezing, lifted his straw hat and marched off. One moment his red waistcoat with the brass buttons flashed in the setting sunshine and then its effulgence vanished and Linda felt conscious that a glowing, ambient warmth had suddenly ceased to enfold her.

She returned home to Prospect Place in a mingled mood of mystification and delight. She felt her adventure entirely perfect and experienced pride at the thought of her unconscious achievements in the soul of Gerald. Her only regret was that, at his expressed wish, she must, for the present, keep their entertainment to herself. And he, increasing his pace

to four miles an hour, strode a few miles through the gathering dusk and considered Linda's mental endowments and how far she could be trusted to smoothe the future way. She was intelligent and he hoped that love might bring its own craft with it and clear difficulties that her limited nature was likely to create. But he knew that love will sharpen the stupidest woman's intellect, as well as modify any home-taught morals she may have respected before its pagan advent. He presently returned to the evening meal in a sanguine spirit.

Gerald was not called to wait long for Linda's decision. What she had not agreed to do for another, she found not difficult to do for him and, already desiring further talk on a subject so entrancing, she agreed to meet him again. Moreover, his expressed regard for secrecy did not deter her. A wish for privacy suggested nothing sinister to her : she held it a compliment and her response respected his entreaty. It gratified him much, for it promised substantial advance and indicated in Linda perfect trust combined with incipient powers of intrigue which he knew would swiftly grow if all went well. For she mentioned a time when she was free and her day's work ended. Moreover, she wrote her direction and slipped it into his hand without speech, thereby indicating that they had better not be seen talking too much together. Linda promised to be at the Bridge beside the osiers at half-past nine two nights later, and until the tryst Gerald Pye avoided her. She had chosen well, for it was usual for Linda to take a run when the business of Mr. Pye's last meal had ended, and Gerald often left his father at the same time, knowing that Simon liked to read and smoke alone for a couple of hours before he retired. The young man not seldom drifted over to Mr. Beedell's bar at this season ; but to-night, when the evening came he was already at Withy Platt Bridge when Linda arrived.

Darkness made it easier to talk, but not so easy to mark the effect of his talk. He thanked her very gratefully for coming, declared it generous and kindly, ventured to think that she would not have done him such an honour, had she not felt his confession a compliment.

‘It was splendid of you. Time has seemed to stand still for me to-day,’ he said, ‘and I thought the evening would never come.’

‘I didn’t see how I could say “no,” Mr. Gerald,’ she answered. ‘But if I’ve done you a funny sort of good turn as you say, then I’m glad.’

‘You’ve done me something a great deal more than a good turn. To make me see what you have made me see by coming into my life, like a wonderful flower, was much more than a good turn. It was a revelation, Linda, and the more I think of it, the more I marvel that just your presence—just the fact of breathing the same air with you—did such wonderful things to me. I can’t explain it to myself, try as I will. No such thing ever happened to me before. It was like suddenly coming awake and looking back and seeing that for all my busy life and its experiences I had never really been awake before. Well may a man find it hard to understand such a sudden glare of dazzling light. And still I wonder and feel half-dazed. It’s a bitter-sweet sensation, because it finds me, as it were, on the brink of a tremendous precipice, faced with dangers and mysteries where I used to trot along so safely. And yet it makes the old road look terrible dull and dusty. They say it is the test of a real man that he is not frightened of danger, or afraid to live dangerously; but I believe women have a great deal more pluck than most men and face danger more bravely than we do. Probably that’s because they are cleverer at looking ahead and know better than men do when danger’s hovering over

them. Anyway, that's the ferment I'm in, and since I can't explain or understand it, I've brought the thing to you. It may be a sort of puzzle that a woman could solve, though no man can.'

Linda did not answer and he asked a question.

'You, with your amazing distinction, have not lived even in this tiny place without waking some such riddles in other minds than mine. That's impossible, and don't think I'm a fool, Linda, and don't know one very commonplace answer to that puzzle. You may be very acutely aware of situations in which men find themselves, though you were never in such situations yourself. But what men feel, it is equally possible that women may feel in the more refined and delicate substance that belongs to them, so answer me this. Did you ever experience anything like this curtain lifting before your eyes and this sort of transformation?'

Still she was silent and Gerald expressed contrition.

'I oughtn't to have asked you. Such things are sacred, of course—things that a woman like you would shut up in a shrine and deny to anybody else. I'm not given to confidences myself for that matter. Only as you were the creator of these wonders, somehow I never felt I could hide them from you, Linda. I longed to thank you and just tell you how I adored what you'd done; and I couldn't do that without telling you what you'd done. Was such a mystery ever in your own experience? Somehow I feel I must ask you. Perhaps it came and vanished again like a rainbow. I feel when I'm with you a call to—no matter. But it means only one thing, because it can't mean any other.'

'I'd say this,' answered Linda, 'though I'd say first that a man's more like to know the meaning of it than a woman. A man's straighter with himself than a woman. He may not be so straight to other people, but he's not often crooked

with himself. I'm talking to you as never I talked to a man, because I know you're telling me what never you told any woman before.'

'And never shall another, Linda.'

'First, there's what happened to you, then. There chanced to be something to me that made you feel you'd like to fall in love with a woman. Not so much me as the woman in me. It made you think if you could find somebody to suit you.'

'You'd put it that way, but only because you are like me myself, Linda. You're humble, and it's an awful mistake to be humble. To be humble is to be undervalued and misunderstood, my dear. I was humble when I came to you and cowardly in a fashion, and no woman likes a cowardly man. I don't know much about women, but I do know that. I'm not going to be humble any more though, and you needn't be either. It seemed far too sudden and tremendous when we had our first talk to dare to take any other line, so I sang small, and God knows I shall always sing small when I think of you ; but that's the sort of honest humility any decent man must feel when he's met perfection. For the rest I'll do or dare and hope nothing but risk everything. You think over that, Linda, and make what you can of it. And that is what has happened to me—the grandest thing that ever did happen to any man. You put that first, and I'll have no mercy now. Love isn't a very merciful task-master. You wouldn't have said "First, there's what happened to you" if you hadn't meant to say "Second, there's what happened to me." And you know by now that everything—everything on earth—hangs for me on the answer to that.'

'That's what you've got no right to ask,' she said, 'nor yet even the right to think that anything has happened to me.'

He was on easy ground now and felt Linda differed not much from other women in the matter of her mental machinery. Her answer was to be expected and he proceeded cheerfully ; but he was abject before her last speech.

‘ You put me in my place, Linda, and never did I think that a woman would have to do that. I’ve always felt for them the respect you feel for the unknowable. They seemed to be made of different clay from men. But none of the very few I ever met made me feel that as you have done. What a staggering thing ! That the woman who made me think of my own beautiful, dead mother should be the first to have to rap me over the knuckles ! But it isn’t me—oh, Linda dear, it isn’t Gerald you are being cross with ; it’s that little mannerless god, Cupid. You’re angry with Love, Linda.’

He babbled on until he made her laugh ; and then he assumed a reverent air, uttered old platitudes that were new to her and told her with all due solemnity that he wanted to marry her and dedicate his future life to her happiness.

‘ I’m dazed,’ he said. ‘ I feel as if I was drowning, Linda, and there’s nobody can save me but you. And if you don’t feel any call to save me, then I’m well content to drown. Nobody else can save me, and I wouldn’t let them if they could. The awful suddenness of the thing has numbed me in a way, because love shows you a great deal more than the loved one. It shows you yourself in a pretty fierce light, and that’s one of the terrors of it to a decent man, because the better he loves, the better he knows he can’t be worth while to the one he loves. That’s the bitterness. No lover worth the name hopes. Love casts out hope ; but that’s nonsense, too, because nothing casts out hope, or can cast it out save the loved one herself. I know only too well what’s in your mind. Unless the same astounding thing that has happened

to me has happened to you, our talk must seem unreal, and I dare say I look a mad sort of bounder even to have told you about it. But don't toll the death knell to-night, Linda. Because I was driven headlong to tell you I loved you, don't be headlong too and send me packing without another thought. Keep an open mind about me for a little day or two. But I needn't ask you to decide for yourself and keep your decision to yourself until I know it. Just one more meeting, precious Linda, and then I shall vanish off the map for evermore, or—— Of course this all seems a hundred years old to me now. I seem to have been loving you countless ages ; but I've got some imagination and I know I hid it as carefully as I could out of respect for you. But to you it must be all so raw and crude and rough.'

'No,' she answered. 'There's nothing raw or rough about you. I believe you. I'll grant that much. I believe you love me. It takes some believing—a man like you with all the world to pick and choose from. Perhaps it's only my vanity that makes me believe you. But I do. I know you want to marry me, Gerald, if words mean anything. I'll start from there and think. And I'll think for you as well as myself. Women think wiser about love than men, I reckon, because it means a lot more in the upshot for them than ever it does for men. Love overcrowds men and makes them get light-headed. I've seen it. But for us there's a lot more to love than just marrying a man.'

She uttered the typical opinions of her class and he applauded them. From that moment he did not mention love again. He echoed her ordinary sentiments and professed his belief in an ideal union built upon devotion and enriched with common self-respect. He made no endearing movement and preserved the rôle most likely to satisfy her maiden

instincts ; while Linda busied herself with her thoughts and, feeling that she must answer, strove to keep triumph and happiness out of her voice. To her nothing but bewildering, unbelievable delight accompanied his proposal. She entertained no doubt of herself, or him ; yet she did think of other people, and her fear centred not upon her own family, but Gerald's father.

‘ In such a mighty thing as this would be,’ she said, ‘ we’ve got to remember others beside ourselves. And first Mr. Pye. He might well put his foot down against it.’

‘ Think of nobody and trouble about nobody on earth but yourself,’ he begged. ‘ Don’t let the ghost of any other being come between you and what I’ve told you to-night. It’s for you first and last and always, and only for you, Linda. And you know it. If you can’t love me and feel you never will, there’s an end of the matter. I respect you a great deal too much ever to ask again, because I know your mind and its rare strength. But if you find, after thinking all round it, that you could care for me well enough to put your beautiful life into my keeping, then the opinion of other people is dust in the balance. Most people are sane anyway, and all that I should ever hear is that I’ve got something infinitely better than I deserve ; and all that you would hear is that you ought to have done a great deal better and waited for a paragon to appear.’

She longed to tell him what was in her heart and feel his arms round her, but she did not.

‘ I’ll think upon all you’ve said to-night, Gerald. I’ll think upon it and call it home and give you your answer to-morrow. Such things make you want to pray about ’em. To-morrow I’ll know.’

‘ God bless you, Linda,’ he answered. ‘ It’s merciful not to let me wait longer than that.’

Then they went back to the village together, where he left her to return alone.

Himself, Gerald strolled by the river and planned the future. He knew what the girl's answer was going to be, but it involved much more than she imagined, or those would imagine who would presently hear it. Time must pass and certain preparations be made before anyone could hear it. Stipulations might easily be put upon Linda, but none to waken her wonder, or make her think twice. There was a great deal to consider for him, and the opposition to his marriage would be the work of others. Marriage was the last thing he intended ; but was going to be the sole and central thought in the girl's mind, since no alternative could present itself to her. To suggest an alternative without losing her altogether might prove impossible. He enjoyed these considerations, being of that order to whom the hunt is better than the quarry and ultimate success not seldom an anticlimax.

VIII.

ANGLES OF VISION.

Ivy Challice entertained a poor opinion of her husband's intelligence and held him a stupid man, who had never understood her aspirations, or shown any sympathy for his sons. She turned for her rare confidences to women and found them more far-seeing than the male. To Verity Challice she never came, because she disliked her rough tongue and direct opinions. No friendship could exist between them ; but Ivy regarded Susan Mingo as acute and quick-witted ; and upon the day that young Pye was to learn his fate, Linda's mother visited the shop-of-all-sorts to find Susan alone. Many other pregnant interchanges

occurred upon that day, for things were come to a head and from various angles Gerald's continued presence at Merton Magna had awakened interest.

Ivy gave Miss Mingo a glimpse into her own mind presently, but first they spoke of Simon Pye, and the post-mistress praised him yet again.

'A wonderful man,' she said, 'and the most wonderful thing about him is that he seems to think everybody's equal. He's got what you might call a sense of equality, Ivy, and don't feel the gap that most people feel to separate 'em from the quality on one side and the gutter folk and tramps and such-like on the other. I believe if he was to meet the King of England, or any down-and-out off the high road, he'd treat 'em much the same—just civil and equal.'

'He'll come and see Granny now and again. He likes her old stuff about the past,' said Ivy. 'And a bit ago he fetched in his son, Mr. Gerald, along with him. He's a fine young man—handsome as a picture and charming as you please. He's been very friendly disposed to my husband and my boys. Got a nice gentlemanly touch to him. He interests me a bit—for a reason.'

'A very smooth, amiable pattern of young man with a queer taste in waistcoats,' said Susan. 'He gets a lot of letters and sends a lot of telegrams. He's one of them racing men seemingly.'

'The young fellow makes a pot of money, so my sons tell me. He's got a brain behind his handsome face. What does he buy, Susan?'

'He don't buy much. He's all for the post-office side; but he did buy some things to-day. Us shopkeepers often amuse ourselves behind the scenes by wondering why such a person should buy such a thing, Ivy. Young Mr. Pye came in the shop early, but not to the government depart-

ment. He bought the best box of chocolates I'd got to begin with.'

'Not the hugeous box with the girl in a bathing-dress—so to call it—going to plunge in the sea?' asked Mrs. Challice.

'Yes, that one, and I'm glad it's gone. Just about the limit, and wouldn't have been allowed on a chocolate box, or anywhere else, when I was young,' answered Susan. 'He bought that, and he bought one of my Shetland wool shawls! He did, and paid for 'em. A puzzle on the face of it, because his sort don't eat chocolates and haven't got no use for people who wear shawls.'

'Did he tell you what they were for?' asked Ivy, but Miss Mingo shook her head.

'He didn't tell me, yet before he'd left the shop I knew,' she answered. 'You get sharp as a needle playing that game and putting two and two together. He said "good-bye" and told me he was going back to London to-morrow, but hoped he'd have the pleasure of seeing me and my wonderful shop again pretty soon. And that told me everything.'

'How?' asked Ivy.

'It was an easy one. He's off, and he's going to make Mr. Pye's staff a gift. He'll give the shawl to Mrs. Butters and the chocolates to your girl. You see if he don't.'

'You clever woman!' said Mrs. Challice. 'Going, is he? My husband was wondering why for he stopped so long. And I've got my cleverness too, though different from yours—a mother's cleverness. Sometimes you see more than has yet happened,' continued Ivy, 'and catch yourself looking in the future; and that's what has happened to me. I'd always felt my girl might draw a husband above her some day, and something has happened to make me remember that. When young Master Pye came in our house with his father, he

praised the family all but one. He never named Linda, though he'd seen more of her than the rest. And when Linda came last night for an hour or two, she was all for the goodness of old Simon, but never named the name of Gerald, as it would have been natural for her to do. And that's new, because when first he came, she did name him. He ain't one of the common herd and she's never met a young man like him before, yet not a word last time she came in.'

'And what did you gather from that?' asked Susan.

'I was a bit amused, my dear woman, because I saw, or thought I saw, that the pair of 'em had defeated their own object. Funny in a way, thinking to hide a thing from a mother's eyes; but just because neither of 'em showed any interest in the other, I saw in a minute there might be something up. They gave themselves away, Susan.'

Miss Mingo was a little doubtful, however.

'Not like Linda to be downy,' she said.

'Every girl in love's downy. 'Tis their protection so to be,' declared Mrs. Challice. 'I don't, of course, go so far as to say that has happened, but it might. Because, when the man came, his father told Dick he'd be like to stop a day or two at most, yet now he's bided very near a fortnight, and I ask myself what would keep such a young fellow as him mooning in a forgotten hole like Merton Magna, and I can't think upon anything but one thing.'

'He's off now, however,' replied Miss Mingo. 'And no doubt, if there's anything to it, Ivy, Linda will find her tongue so soon as he's gone.'

'Unless he put an order for silence on her,' answered Linda's mother.

They considered the problem and Ivy advanced further evidence; while elsewhere Mr. Pye was talking to his son after their breakfast. The elder had something rather

awkward to say, and felt relieved on finding, when the time came, that it was not necessary to do so. Simon had begun mildly to wonder at Gerald's enthusiasm for the country, and his doubts at its reality increased. He knew that the young man could conduct his business over telegraph wires and was aware that he spent no small part of his time with sporting newspapers ; but these things were surely a bleak substitute for the race-course. Still Gerald stopped, offered his company on foot and continued to declare his delight in the rural scene. Nor was it easy to cut short the visit, since Simon himself had insisted on its protraction. Now, however, he wanted his son away and was weary of him, his activities and his flamboyant personality. He interfered with the twilight existence that his father chose to live and the elder desired his home to himself. This fact Simon now prepared to announce ; but young Pye spoke first and declared his intention of returning to London on the following day.

'I must get back home, Dad,' he began. '—to call it home. Though it will seem rather deadly and empty without you. But work's work, and there are other reasons besides work why I should be off. You have been very sporting and more than generous of both your time and money ; but I feel I've quartered myself on you quite long enough.'

Simon was relieved and his relief made him gracious.

'You've found the way to me,' he said, 'and I hope you may visit me again for purely filial reasons next time.'

'So I will,' promised Gerald. 'I've rather neglected my duty in that matter, Dad, and your immense kindness and warm welcome, after all these years, makes me a bit ashamed of myself when I think of them. As a matter of fact, in strict confidence of course, it is quite possible that I shall be back sooner than you want me.'

Upon which Mr. Pye's geniality vanished.

'Why?' he asked. 'I'm quite unprepared to do anything more for you, and you needn't hope it.'

'No, indeed. It isn't that. I'm as proud as you are in my own way. I'll never ask you for another farthing as long as I live, Dad, and find some means some day to return all I owe you with interest. But outside father and son, the world doesn't stand still. One goes on living and experiencing the unexpected and finding life laugh at our plans for living it and turn our convictions and intentions upside down.'

'What exactly do you mean by that?' enquired Simon lighting his morning pipe and taking up the newspaper.

'Well, in my case, it means that most unforeseen and unimagined events have overtaken me—here of all places on earth—and I'm rather at a crisis.'

Since he was not personally involved, Mr. Pye kept calm and took a philosophic view of this astonishing statement. He put down the newspaper, observed that no anxiety, but rather pleasure, lighted his son's attractive countenance and spoke in general terms.

'People talk loosely of a crisis,' he said, 'as if it was something extraordinary, whereas the truth about the life of the individual man, or the nation, or the world at large is that all things are inevitably critical all the time. Crisis is the common state. Each crisis leads to another. Crisis is in the air we breathe, boy. There is nothing in existence that does not depend upon the passage from one crisis to the next. Only death ends the story and puts life beyond the reach of them.'

'Jolly deep, that,' agreed Gerald, 'and true, no doubt. But when you're up against something you were never up

against before, Dad, it looks a bit out of the common. At your age you can take everything in your stride, no doubt : you're so jolly wise ; and at my age I've got to believe everything you say, though I can't imagine what sort of a crisis could possibly come to anybody after they are sixty years old.'

. 'I suppose not,' assented Simon. 'Youth does not associate crises with the fossil stages of existence ; but the fossil may know better. And what upheaval has happened in your life to waken this agitation ?'

But Gerald was not prepared to tell him. The day continued young and no word or communication had as yet passed between him and Ethelinda.

'You'll be the first to know when it has taken shape, Dad. That's why I said you might see me again uncomfortably soon for your own peace of mind. The thing is quite uncertain as yet—on the knees of the gods, as they say.'

Gerald left him then and took occasion to find Linda. He did not stop with her, however. He did not even speak to her, for, at his approach, she dived in her pocket and gave him a little scrap of screwed-up paper. Without a word he took it and went away. If his father had seen him beside the river presently, extracting the full flavour of pleasant anticipation from his letter before he read it, he might have noted the old, weathered expression of the connoisseur—certainly ugly enough on his young features.

Linda wrote briefly to say that she loved him and was ready and willing to marry him presently. Whereupon Gerald grew young again and scribbled a note in answer upon a sheet of his pocket-book. He said that he should still leave upon the following morning, but that she would hear from him a day later and that he would return in a week to announce their betrothal. When they met presently, he

had his first kiss of her and pressed her body close to him and gave her his letter.

Elsewhere, at a later time in that day, Richard Challice sat with his mother upon his plot of earth, where she would sometimes come in the evening to watch him work. His hopes for the lime-kiln had fallen through, but he devoted his leisure hours to the land and was clearing it steadily, his mind on crops. Dick had hoped that Samson and Leonard would help him, but they did not. He built a comfortable seat for Verity upon the place and she delighted to be there when the sun shone. None had again mentioned Gerald Pye's name in her hearing after the old woman's explosion, but this evening, when he joined her to rest awhile, Richard spoke of the young man.

'Mr. Simon's son is off to-morrow,' he said. 'I heard it from Mrs. Butters as I came along. He's given her a shawl for a gift, and he's given Linda a big box of chocolates. Better if he'd made it money.'

'His father will be glad,' answered Verity. 'He don't like his son too well.'

'No more do you, I remember. Why not, Mother? It ain't often you turn against the young. Ivy and the boys like him—so do I, for that matter. But I'd put your sense a lot higher than them, of course. What's wrong with him and why did you say he was a liar? He never lied to you.'

'There's things you know inside you without tests nor yet trials,' she answered, 'and there's people carry their characters on their faces. If that man's father had never named him, it would have been all the same. His father didn't put my back up against the young man, because I never believe what a parent says of a child—whether it's to praise, or blame.'

And I didn't turn against him because he talked to Ivy and not to me. That was natural, because she's a fine woman still and young for her forty years. But I conned him and I listened to him and I loathed him.'

'Why? You must know why, Mother? I'll grant a woman can see deeper into a man than another man can, no doubt, because she's got the magnifying eyes to do it. But why should you be on his father's side—against him, so to say—if you've got nothing against him yourself and don't take Mr. Pye's view of him?'

Verity considered her answer for some time before she gave it and pondered her words.

'I grant,' she replied, 'that it might puzzle you, because you've seen the chap at his best, with all to gain by being civil, and you've took him for granted, same as everybody else. And I'd have took him for granted but for what I saw and heard and understood—all out of sight from a man like you. It isn't his bloody waistcoat and his bounce and his laughter and his cleverness to say the right thing to tickle the hearer. It's what's hid and looks out of his eyes now and again, because he can't help it. He wouldn't let it look out of 'em if he could help it, but it's alive inside of him and will be peeping. There's things in everybody that look out of their eyes unbeknownst if you're quick enough to catch 'em. I know his sort. Men like him will trail round a gipsy camp, like foxes round a hen-roost, if they find a pretty girl or two. That's what he is—a love-hunter—common as maggots in every town. Women know 'em better than men, because they hide themselves from men. Nasty stuff. I'm very glad he's clearing out.'

'You mean Linda!' he exclaimed. 'Good God, it would take more than he could do, or any other man, to make trouble with Linda. She's not that sort, Mother.'

‘Haven’t Ivy ever named her name along with Gerald Pye’s to you?’ asked Verity.

‘Never.’

‘Too clever, I expect. Better leave it if he’s going. Not a shadow on Linda; but she’s no more built to know a lie when she hears it than any other girl, and his sort are the masters of lying. Lies are their stock-in-trade and how to make ’em sound like truth their triumph. He’d be so full of tricks as a Barbary ape if he was along with a young, green girl he fancied. He’d know how to dazzle her, and he’d have the craft to study her nature and find what was the right way to get what he wanted. He wouldn’t pay a penny more than he was bound, but lies cost nothing, and the old, well-tried lies are best. They never fail, because a good liar is always a good actor and carries ’em off.’

Richard listened with an open mouth to these opinions.

‘My stars! You know the seamy side of some of us,’ he said. ‘But, so far as this chap’s concerned, I hope you’ve read him wrong. I don’t know him, but I know Linda. She’d see through any lies he could tell her.’

‘You speak like an honest man,’ she answered, ‘but an ignorant one. I don’t join his name to Linda’s—God forbid; but——’

She broke off.

‘Drop it,’ she said, ‘and get back to your work. Why the mischief should I croak about young people and read evil into their silly faces? We’ll grant he’s all right. Say no more, Dick.’

‘Did you know that Linda had given John Caryl the go by? Told him three days ago that they’d best drop their friendship.’

‘Yes; she told me that was off. No hurry for her. Johnny’s too heavy in hand for her at her time of life. A

very good man, all the same. You'd never hear him lie. But dull. There's nothing so dull as faithfulness for some men and women. They wilt under it. John will bide a bachelor now, I shouldn't wonder.'

'So he swears; but that's nonsense. He'll find something more like himself presently,' said Richard. 'It's hit him hard and made him more tedious than usual, poor chap, but he'll get over it.'

The man saw his mother home presently and the family assembled for their evening meal. Ivy asked him if it were true that Simon Pye's son was going, and he answered that it was true. Her dreams faded upon this news, for she had hoped that Susan Mingo might be mistaken, and Ivy absented herself as soon as she might. Verity made no comment, and when she retired to her upper chamber, Richard strolled down to the 'Cat and Fiddle.'

'What's this they tell—that "Robin Redbreast" is off and away, Dick?' Saul Date enquired. 'You'll be most like to know if it's true.'

'That's right: he's leaving to-morrow,' replied Challice. 'Back to the hosses, no doubt.'

'How do he get on with Mr. Pye?' asked Mr. Beedell.

'All right; but his father lives quiet for choice, and Master Gerald stirs things up and makes 'em hum rather loud. I dare say he'll be glad to find himself alone.'

The men came and went, and when Date and Matthew Sloggett had departed, Mr. Beedell asked Richard to stop a minute or two after closing as he desired to speak with him. Dick therefore waited when the bar was empty.

'It's this,' explained David hurriedly, 'and don't think none the worse of me for telling you. I ain't no mischief-maker, but quite the contrary, and that's why I speak. Date's not a man whose word weighs with me, or any

trustable folk ; but he said, before you came in, that he was drifting home late and passed Gerald Pye down by Withy Platt along with your Linda. I tell you in strict confidence, Dick, and I dare say there's no word of truth in it and no word of harm if it is true ; but you'll take my meaning and think no worse of me for warning you. Young Pye's a dashing man and a good-looker, and any maid might be flattered to take a walk along with him.'

Dick nodded.

'I've nought against him,' he answered, 'though I've overheard him say a coarse word once or twice in this bar. But I'd trust my girl to look after herself all right. There's one here and there that don't like the man, however. Thank you, Dave. May be a lie, as you say. That's easy to find out, because I'll ask her and Linda don't know the meaning of lying.'

'There's always plenty like Date and Tidy to think evil. It's known that she's given up Johnny Caryl, so she's free, and a beautiful piece like her would challenge any man,' admitted Beedell.

'As for him,' he continued, 'he's Simon's son and a straighter sort than Mr. Pye you won't find. So, even if they did go walking, only a foul mind would build on it. Gerald Pye's got plenty up his sleeve, no doubt, like all them men that follow horses ; but I'd say he was a decent breed of man. His father wouldn't have any truck with him otherwise.'

'That's that, then,' summed up Challice, 'and a word to the wise, David. I've nothing against the young fellow. His father don't like him very much, but that's no business of ours. Anyway, he's off, and if you hear Linda's name spoke along with his again, you'll be safe to tell the man that does it to shut his mouth.'

‘Just what I did do,’ answered Beedell, and Richard left him.

It was too late to see Linda, but he took the matter home and spoke to Ivy when they had gone to bed. She was immensely interested and the news tended to revive faded hopes. She trusted that the rumour might be true, but made very light of it.

‘Young people go their own way and keep their innocent secrets to themselves nowadays,’ she said. ‘And who’s the worse? What we don’t know we don’t fret about. Len and Samson go their own way and don’t ask us how to spend their time. As long as our childer keep out of mischief you can let them fellow their own pleasures and no harm done. And no man will ever lead Linda into mischief. She’s not that sort and knows her worth.’

‘Where there’s honey there’s bees, and where there’s bees there’s stingers,’ said Dick as he undressed; but Ivy only laughed.

‘That’s true. You can’t have anything for nothing. But you’re dealing with a gentleman, so you needn’t to think evil. Young Pye’s a lot out of the common herd, just the same as Linda is herself. He’s clever and he’d see what she was very quick. Being educated and high-minded he’d note her fine bearing, and if he asked her to take a walk, why not? He’s a bachelor, and if he was to fall in love with Linda——’

‘That’s enough,’ said Dick. ‘That’s enough, Ivy. Don’t let yourself build castles in the air like that. It ain’t no castle in the air for me, anyway. I wouldn’t stand for nothing like that.’

‘Because your mother spoke against the man for spite,’ said Ivy. ‘You keep an open mind, anyway. I’ve heard you say you judge everybody by themselves and not by what other folk think of ’em. And what have you got

against young Pye ? Nothing. You was the first to praise him when he helped the boys to win a bet. And, be it as it will, they won't ask you. If anything was to come of it and the man's fallen for her and wants to marry her, he'll ask her. And she'll answer him, and that's all he'll want to know.'

'Perhaps ; but a damned sight less than I'll want to know,' said Dick.

They talked on in the dark and Ivy calmed him.

'Don't meet trouble half-way. That's not like you,' she said. 'We're a pair of silly fools to waste a thought on such a thing. Men like Gerald Pye don't marry working women, and even if he was crooked and wanted something for nothing, you've got to remember that Linda's a Challice. She's never yet met the man she could think of as a husband, and you can lay your life that, love a man or not, she wouldn't go to one unless she was his lawful wife first.'

'I've heard him say one or two pretty foul things about women at the "Cat and Fiddle" when he didn't know I was listening,' grumbled Dick ; but his wife only laughed.

'What man don't one time or another ?' she asked.

(To be continued.)

ANNE THACKERAY RITCHIE.¹

(June 9, 1837–February 26, 1919.)

BY MURIEL KENT.

I

WHEN the *Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie*² were given to the world, many people who had never seen her felt that they had gained a friend with a tender heart and a discerning spirit. Those who were not too young to have read *The Village on the Cliff* and *Old Kensington* returned with fresh pleasure to the delicate art of her novels, or to her later studies in criticism and biography. For the *Letters* reveal the living, lovable woman herself as no memoir written by another pen could do; and they answer finally many conjectures about her father.

The introductory chapter gives some glimpses of W. M. Thackeray's first-born, at the age of two, that seem to forecast her future life and gifts. She could remember the silent rapture with which she gazed at a pair of red shoes on her own little feet as she sat on the floor; and an occasion when she escaped from her nursery at the sound of a barrel-organ near her home (then at 13, Great Coram Street, Brunswick Square), and was found by her father, dancing merrily to the music in the street.

¹ Mrs. Richard Fuller (Hester Ritchie) has given me generous help in writing this centenary article. I owe to her the opportunity of reading 'Little Scholars'; and 'The Story of Elizabeth' in her illustrated edition; also unpublished material from the great store of letters written to A. T. R. by her numerous friends.—M. K.

² Edited by Hester Ritchie. 1924. (John Murray.)

The 'eager life of seeing and being,' as she called it in her last letter, was already stirring in her ; and her adoration of her father dates, too, from that early age—when she found him not only supremely amusing, but an unfailing source of security and happiness. He recognised even then 'a great power of imagination in these little creatures, a creative fancy and belief that is very curious to watch' ; and he resolved that his child should not be delivered into the hands of 'horrid matter-of-fact child-rearers,' but should have 'a very extensive and instructive store of learning in Tom Thumbs, Jack-the-Giant-Killers, etc.'

It was an exceedingly happy home that Thackeray was forced to give up in 1840, owing to his wife's illness which followed the birth of another daughter. He sent the three-year-old Anne Isabella and the baby to the care of their grandparents in Paris, and remained to watch over his wife with the utmost devotion ; taking her abroad in search of a cure, or trying one treatment after another in England, and struggling all the while to earn enough by his pen to meet all these heavy expenses.

It was not till Anne was nine years old that she and her younger sister Minny returned to London, where Thackeray had taken 13,¹ Young Street, Kensington Square, the old-fashioned, quiet, sunny house that gave him 'the greatest comfort and enjoyment . . . after the racket of St. James's Street.' The children found their new surroundings wholly delightful ; and their father, then and when they grew up, did his best to be both parents in one to his girls ; studying their characters with insight, treating them with the seriousness that children love—yet as their best playfellow too.

¹ Now No. 16, and mentioned, among other houses distinguished by their owners, in the article 'Kensington Square,' CORNHILL, October, 1936.

There is a charm in the accounts of their life together in unspoiled Kensington that tempts a Thackeray student to dwell on those creative years when he was at work, in his bow-windowed study, on *Vanity Fair*, and *Esmond* and *Pendennis*.

II.

It was no wonder that Anne's quick intelligence matured early in such an atmosphere, and she recollected that she 'had written several novels and a tragedy by the age of fifteen.' But Thackeray was too wise to encourage a precocious talent, and bade her read books by other authors instead of spending time on her own scribbling. Her sense of compassion was always strong, and in 1848 she and her young friends formed a society for the 'stoppage of starvation' throughout the world. She was invited to be secretary to its 'Honble board of Juveniles,' and her letter in reply, setting forth her views on what their aims and procedure should be, is, in substance and expression, a remarkable production for a child of eleven; showing the vigour and independence of mind that were among her cradle gifts.

Thackeray often employed 'his own women,' as he liked to call the two girls, to help him in his work; sometimes with his wood blocks for *Punch*, or as models for his drawings. When Anne was fourteen she began to act as his secretary, writing portions of the novels at his dictation. While Thackeray was absent in America for six months (1852-3), giving his lectures on 'The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century,' Anne and her sister stayed with their grandparents in Paris. From there she wrote a long letter¹ to her father, with a vivid description of the entry

¹ *Letters*, Chapter IV.

of Napoleon III to the capital ; of the decorative aides-de-camp who galloped about and made her wish that she had been born to that position.

' And Jerome on horseback very unsteady and fat, and then all alone in front of a Regiment his Royal Highness . . . on a prancing horse with a red velvet saddle and golden bridles, and I forget what coat Louis Napoleon wore, but he had a fine red ribbon across his body. They cried " Vive l'Empereur " a little, not very much. Grammie says she counted twelve, but I assure you there were more.'

After Thackeray's return from his American tour he took his daughters abroad, first to the familiar Paris, and then to Rome for the winter months. In her 'Notes on Family History,' Lady Ritchie recalled, long afterwards, the impressions of that winter : the glowing colours of the sky and city ; her glimpse of Lockhart, then a dying man, being taken for a drive in the Campagna ; also, that of all their friends in Rome, Mrs. Browning and Mrs. Sartoris (Adelaide Kemble) were the ones they liked best.

In the following year (1854) the Thackerays moved from Young Street to 36, Onslow Square, which was to be their home till 1861. When Anne, at seventeen, was released from the schoolroom, her mingled gaiety and thoughtfulness attracted both her contemporaries and her father's friends, to whom she now had to act as hostess. Her journal¹ tells us of Millais, 'a tall good-looking Pre-Raphaelitish young man with a quantity of wavy hair,' at a dinner-party, with the Leeches and other guests ; of FitzGerald and Spedding who came to dine on another occasion, 'and were as kind and queer and melancholy as men could be.'

¹ *Letters*, Chapter V.

Then there were parties to attend, at Little Holland House, or Lady Palmerston's, and all kinds of interesting people to meet—the Carlyles, Mrs. Cameron, Mrs. Norton, Lady Georgina Fullerton, and Henry van Artevelde Taylor, 'a grand-looking man with a high forehead.' On Sundays she could hear Charles Kingsley's inspiring sermons; or take a long walk with her father, 'along the Thames to Chiswick, past quaint old Georgian houses, gaily decked with flowers and sunshine, and children playing about and kindly holiday people.' Thackeray described her in one of his letters as 'a perfect well-spring of happiness in herself'; yet, with all her love of dancing and parties, it is a meeting with a lame Crimean that she records in her journal, and she cannot forget that, while she writes, 'the bells have been ringing for the taking of Sebastopol, the guns are firing from Cremorne.'

At the end of June, 1855, Thackeray finished *The Newcomes*, parting sadly from the characters who had been his companions for the best part of two years; and in the following October he began his second lecturing tour in America, while the girls lived in a little Parisian apartment next their grandmother, and took lessons in music, drawing and French. That winter, too, they were often at Mrs. Sartoris's 'beautiful old house in the Rue Royale . . . (which) seemed all full of light and music': or with the Brownings

*'in a little, warm, sunny, shabby, happy apartment, with a wood fire always burning, and a big sofa, where she sat and wrote her books out of a tiny inkstand, in her beautiful, delicate handwriting. Mr. Browning would come in and talk. Pen was a little boy with long curls, and some of the grand gentlemen from Mrs. Sartoris' used to come in and sit round the fire.'*¹

¹ 'Notes on Family History,' written in 1894.

III.

If Anne Thackeray had been deliberately trained for authorship, her 'life as a girl could not have been better arranged to that end. Her father's companionship and counsel, the friends who surrounded them, the books she read, and the weeks or months spent abroad, especially when Thackeray travelled with his daughters—all these contributed material that was seized upon by her observant, critical faculties, and wrought into her own genius.

When she was twenty-three, he decided that the time had come for her to try her hand at writing again, and he suggested a promising subject. This was the account of a round of visits to some charity schools in London, beginning with one of an early 'nursery' kind in Pimlico. She went next to a small industrial school for girls in Kensington, and finally to a group which had been founded for Jewish children. One of these stood 'in a deserted old square near the city'; another, in Spitalfields, was crowded with boys and girls, many of them the children of refugees from Russia, Poland and Hungary, and drawn from poverty-stricken homes, yet showing a high standard of intelligence. Even there, only a hundred or so out of the large number of girls—'the very poorest and hungriest'—came forward for the hot bread-and-milk which was offered on winter mornings in this school.

In the infant school, the visitor found four hundred small Jewish children waiting for their dinner, consisting of rice and browned potatoes, provided twice a week at the cost of a halfpenny. It was a scene that no one could describe more vividly :

'Little Jew babies are uncommonly like little Christians, just as funny, as hungry, as helpless, and happy now that the bowls

of food come steaming in. . . . Five little cook-boys, in white jackets and caps and aprons, appear in a line, with trays upon their heads, like the processions out of the "Arabian Nights"; and as each cook-boy appears, the children cheer, and the potatoes steam hotter and hotter, and the mistresses begin to ladle them out. . . .

Before we came away the mistress opened a door and showed us one of the prettiest and most touching sights I have ever seen. It was the arcaded playground full of happy, shouting, tumbling, scrambling little creatures; . . . absurd toddling races going on, whole files of little things wandering about with their arms round one another's necks.'

Thackeray himself named the essay 'Little Scholars,' and sent it to Mr. George Smith, asking him to decide whether it should be given a place in their new periodical, the CORNHILL MAGAZINE. To her 'pride and rapture,' it was published in the May number, 1860; and she made her bow in good company, for among the other contributions to that first volume were instalments of *Framley Parsonage*, *Lovel the Widower*, and *Roundabout Papers*; also 'A fragment of a Story by the late C. Brontë.'

Two years later her novel, *The Story of Elizabeth*, found delighted readers, first as a serial in CORNHILL,¹ and afterwards in book form, illustrated by Frederick Walker. It is interesting to read contemporary judgments on the powers and promise shown in her earliest work; of Smith and Elder's open admiration of her style; and Rhoda Broughton's 'astonished delight . . . in its wonderful novelty and spring-like quality.' But this first novel was still being discussed and praised three years afterwards (1866), when Kinglake wrote to remind the author that he had been

¹ Published in five parts; September, 1862-January, 1863.

made to look rather foolish at some London gathering by being forced to admit that he had not read *The Story of Elizabeth*. He went on to tell her how 'exceedingly delighted' the book had made him, when he took it down to enjoy in the country. That J. A. Froude became an equally warm admirer is proved by his request for a contribution from Anne Thackeray to *Fraser's Magazine* under his editorship (1860-74); and by the undated letter to her which I am allowed to quote here :

'Dear Miss Thackeray,

I won't deny that I am disappointed. Ever since I read "Elizabeth" I have been breaking the tenth commandment and coveting you from the "Cornhill." I shall not give up hopes of eventually succeeding. . . . I shall be much surprised if you do not carry on into the next generation the fame of the name which you bear.'

The story which gave so much pleasure, both to literary critics and ordinary folk, is a very simple one, woven round a heroine with a lovely face and an undisciplined nature that leads her into desperate plights before she learns wisdom and reaches her haven. The scene lies mainly in Paris; and against that background are skilfully drawn portraits of men and women in the French Protestant community shepherded by Elizabeth's stepfather—character sketches which show the direction that Anne Thackeray's genius would take, and her wide human sympathies. Even in her youth she seems to have been invincibly modest, and the immediate success of her small canvas only made her remark : 'My good fortune, I don't know why, makes me feel ashamed.'

Her second book was not begun till 1865, and the interval had been filled with ineffaceable experiences. After

Thackeray's sudden death on Christmas Eve, 1863, the sisters passed sorrowful months in wandering about ; beginning at Freshwater, in the companionship of the Tennysons and the Camerons, and finally settling in Onslow Gardens. Anne spent nearly two years over *The Village on the Cliff*, working hard in her London study, and then going to Caen to make studies of Normandy scenes and figures. On her return, while she was trying to write the last chapter, her beloved Minny became engaged to Leslie Stephen. After their marriage (1867) they made their home with Anne, first at 16, Onslow Gardens, afterwards in Southwell Gardens ; so that the sisters were only separated by Minny's early death in 1875.

The Village on the Cliff came out as a serial in CORNHILL, from July, 1866, to February, 1867, and when published as a book, three editions were called for within a few months. Again she chose for her subject a quiet study of temperament and circumstance, rather than a plot of action ; but the whole story formed an artistic harmony which gave it an abiding place in her readers' memories and affections. The great advance on her first novel is partly a matter of technique, but is due far more to ' the deeper tones and understandings ' which had come to herself, as to Elizabeth, through grief.

This book, too, discloses fully her characteristic way of conveying the atmosphere of a place ; its very air, and the way the light falls on sea and land. She takes us with her by the Bayeux diligence to Petitport, to share her vision of the fishing village perched high above the shore and boats ; of the Château de Tracy with its avenues and gardens and vine-wreathed walls ; of the little châtelet decked out with balconies and weathercocks and bright green shutters, to which M. le Maire brought back Catherine George as his bride. Above all, she sets before us the broad, sunny

countryside of Normandy and the old, fortified *abbaye* which had become Reine Chrétien's farmstead.

'There is a great archway at the farm at Tracy, with heavy wooden doors studded with nails. . . . The hay is stacked in what was a chapel once; the yellow trusses are hanging through the crumbling flamboyant east window. There is a tall watch-tower to which a pigeon-cote has been affixed, and low cloisters that are turned into outhouses and kitchens. . . . The great harvest waggons pass through the archway without unloading; so do the cows at milking-time.'

In that setting stands 'Reine in her white coiffe, . . . straight, slender, vigorous; dressed in the Sunday dress of the women of those parts, with this difference, that instead of two plastered loops of hair like a doll's, a tawny ripple flowed under the lace of her cap and low over her arched brows.' Reine, with her grave beauty and noble, stormy nature, finding 'the supplement and encouragement of her lonely life' in the sound of the sea, is finely conceived and drawn. But the character who best reveals Anne Thackeray's insight, and becomes, in his own way, immortal, is that of Fontaine, the busy little *maire*, with his cornet and his feather brush—talkative, trivial, even ridiculous, yet capable of a great tenderness and fidelity, and an impulsive courage which takes him to his death.

The author could not bear to part altogether from this hero in disguise; and in a later book we meet Fontaine again, as a younger man and before his first marriage, but the same simple, cheerful soul; as much concerned with the affairs of his neighbours in Visy le Roi as afterwards in Petitport. The story¹ is in the tradition of *The Village on*

¹ 'Across the Peat-fields,' published with other stories and sketches in *Miss Williamson's Divagations*. 1881.

the *Cliff*; the actors clearly and vigorously presented, and the scenery of the peat district realistically drawn :

' . . . the sun sets across miles of flat spreading fields that are crossed and recrossed in every direction by narrow canals, of which the sluggish waters reflect the willows planted along their course. . . . The earth is nearly black ; the water is stained by strange tints. The country is sombre with peat-fields, and here and there are peat manufactories, standing lonely against the sky. . . . Every here and there at crossways are deep pools where lilies and green tangles are floating on the brown eddies. Sometimes of an evening, when the sun sets over the black fields, long-drawn chords of light strike against the stems of the poplar trees, and then their quaint mop heads seem on fire, while the flames roll down from the West with vapour and with murky splendour.'

IV.

I have quoted those two descriptive passages because they are not only instances of the writer's 'religious love of nature,' but are also symbolic of her attitude to the whole of life. She was aware of the *detail* of every scene, as she cared for the individual in each situation, with rare intensity ; and her touch illuminated human problems and relationships in the same manner that her prose—finished as a Pre-Raphaelite painting, yet imaginative too—produced the form and colour of a landscape. She acknowledged her predilection when staying at Aldworth in 1872 :

' This is such a lovely view, almost too lovely for my special taste. I like a cock and a hen and a kitchen garden, and some lilies and lavender quite as well as these great dream worlds and cloud-capped lands. . . . I can never appropriate a horizon,

as one does a haycock, or a bunch of river weeds, or the branches of a tree.' ¹

She wrote in *The Village on the Cliff*: 'Love is the faith, and friendship should be the charity of life.' The words might be taken as an epitome of her own working creed, tried out in joys and sorrows till its truth radiated from her presence—as the Sargent portrait revealed unmistakably. The scope of her interests, her friendships, and her correspondence seems boundless. There was scarcely a man or woman distinguished in letters or art, during the second half of the nineteenth century and up to the end of her life, who was not numbered among the multitude who loved and honoured her. Miss Martineau, reading *The Village on the Cliff* as a serial, recognised the rising star and wrote: 'Miss Thackeray's CORNHILL tale is growing beautiful beyond compare. A great fame is in the future for her, if she lives—which I pray she may.' Her memories and affections, ranging over a wonderful diversity of times and personalities, went back to the Kembles, the Carlyles, George Eliot, and their peers of the older generation.

Tennyson, and his wife and son, were close friends of long standing. The poet wrote to her from Farringford in 1875:

'Dearest Annie,

. . . I should have liked to have heard Jenny Lind sing, and to have read your *Angelica* in the "Cornhill," but they have not sent it me. They served me the same Trick last year in the same month (I think) whereby I missed the reading of another of your delightful—will that word do—essays. Do you stop the "Cornhill" yourself for hate and fear of me whom am your devoted A. T.'

¹ *Letters*, Chapter VIII.

Robert Browning owed to Anne Thackeray the title of one of his poems. Both of them had been staying in a part of Normandy which, in conversation, she spoke of as 'Red Cotton Night Cap Country.' Browning at once said, 'That shall be the title for the poem I am at work on.' In 1873 he sent her a copy with this dedicatory note :

Dear Miss Thackeray,

All the book is yours—but this particular copy is yours in the ordinary sense, along with the truest thanks and regards of R. Browning.'

Frederick Locker-Lampson, an old admirer of father and daughter, sent from Rowfant a verse for A. T. R. ; dated December 3rd, 1890, to show that he was 'close to seventy, when he composed it,' and with a regret that he could not do better :

*'I wish to write what She would read,
I have the want without the skill—
I wish, an idle wish, indeed !
Her Father's hand could guide the quill.'*

Swinburne was one of the many who showed to her, not only warm friendship, but the deference which her fellow-writers always felt to be due to her knowledge and wit and acumen. George Meredith paid his homage to her in violets, sent regularly from his garden at Box Hill. Henry James called himself 'her stoutest and fondest old adherent.' John Morley, for whom she had undertaken a piece of work, apparently with some trepidation, wrote to her in 1885 :

'Dear Mrs. Ritchie,

I am delighted with your opening : it is full, full of the old charm, and I assure you, on the faith of gentleman and editor,

that you need not have one bit of that "stage fright" of which I heard that you were talking. It is as good as good can be.

yours sincerely,

J. M.'

In Lady Ritchie's old age—to use a term which had only a chronological application to her—and during the War, she wrote to Thomas Hardy to tell him of the impression made upon her by *The Dynasts*, which she had just finished 'with awe and with absolute admiration.' He replied :

'It makes me cheerful to get your feeling about "The Dynasts," though I fear the effect may owe as much to your imagination as to my writing. However, that is always more or less the case : unless the reader meets the writer half-way, the latter is powerless.'

V.

Anne Thackeray's reputation as a novelist was further increased by *Old Kensington*, which, after appearing serially in CORNHILL (April, 1872–April, 1873), went through five editions. In spite of the welcome given to this book, she forsook fiction to a great extent thereafter for essays and such congenial studies as her *Life of Madame de Sevigné*, *A Book of Sibyls*, and numerous Introductions to new editions of classics—notably those written for the Biographical and the Centenary editions of her father's works.

In 1877 her marriage to her cousin, Richmond Ritchie, crowned a friendship which had been 'like new life in the darkness and gloom' of the time that followed Minny Stephen's death. For some years they lived at 27, Young Street—a happy return to the associations of her childhood. She described it as 'the prettiest old house with a long garden at the back and an ancient medlar tree with a hole in

it.' There a son and daughter were born to them ; and the Kensington home was the first of a series of dwelling-places, at Wimbledon, in London again, and finally at Freshwater, where she had learned to look sorrow in the face long ago ; and where she had heard Tennyson read ' Maud ' aloud in tones ' like harmonious thunder and lightning.'

But, however full and absorbing her family life might be, her former occupations were not crowded out ; nor did her friends lose their place in her affections. Still less did she allow frequent ill-health to interfere with her work or her endless schemes for helping less fortunate people. She never became a ' professional ' philanthropist, but her immense natural kindness overflowed through personal channels to the end of her days. She gave herself unsparingly, to meet the most diverse claims, with a kind of divine impartiality. Her conversation was a delight to those who could appreciate the rich stores of her mind and spirit. Younger authors were encouraged by her sympathetic, yet penetrating, criticism. Men and women in misfortune found in her a true helper ; and she was always ready to plead a private or a public cause by her pen, if that were the most effectual means.

She was equally concerned with a host of obscure folk—such as the poor, valiant old woman of whom she wrote : ' Even Wordsworth doesn't stir my hope as does such a generous unconscious life as this one, full of trial but brimful of tender affection.' Her own good deeds were done with the same simplicity and inevitableness—and surely no wish was ever more abundantly realised than Thackeray's Christmas one for his ' Nanny,' written in 1845 : ' I would sooner have you gentle and humble-minded than ever so clever.' ¹

It was the love given to her by others that continually

¹ *Letters*, Chapter II.

filled her with gratitude, and caused her to declare : ‘ No one ever had such a life as mine, or such love in it, each after its kind, and this I do feel in my heart.’¹ She had, too, a profound sense of all that she owed to the influences that had entered into and shaped, as she believed, her inmost self. One by one, her great contemporaries, the men and women she had communed with from her youth, passed away ; but the withdrawal of their visible presence only made her more conscious of this spiritual immanence, as she acknowledged in her recollections of Fanny Kemble² : ‘ Of all possessions, that of the added power which comes to us through the gift of others is one of the most mysterious and precious.’

When, at the age of seventy, she visited Norway for the first time, she was as responsive to the beauty and grandeur about her as in earlier travels ; equally ready to enter into all the exciting or comic incidents ; and able to enjoy the new experiences with the youthful zest that never wholly failed her.

Her loyalties and convictions were deep-rooted in the old order of strong characters, holding definite faiths and codes, like her beloved Fanny Kemble of whom she wrote in the essay quoted above : ‘ The Elect are those who put life into one, who give courage to the faint-hearted, hope, out of their own heart’s constancy.’ Both, however, were too vital for rigidity ; and both kept to the end ‘ the power of making new friends, of being loved by them and of loving them.’ For such souls, disciplined and receptive too, modern thought, with its strange, disturbing pronouncements, could not ‘ put away the clear clanging of King Arthur’s sword or Colonel Newcome’s old cavalry sabre.’³

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The last years of Anne Thackeray Ritchie’s life were

¹ *Letters*. To Richmond Ritchie, 1876.

² *From Friend to Friend*. 1919.

³ *Letters*, Chapter VIII.

shadowed by her husband's death in 1912, and by the War. But no anguish could overwhelm her vital faith and courage and serenity ; nor did she cease to give.

‘ . . . thanks to Him
Who never is dishonoured in the spark
He gave us from His fire of fires . . . ’

Though she outlived so many of her old friends, she still rejoiced in them, and in those who remained with her, holding past and present together in her heart to the end. Of all the praise uttered as a memorial of that gracious life, the words that sum it up most completely were once spoken of Anne Thackeray Ritchie by her friend M. Charles Lesage :

‘ *C'est la femme la plus aimée du monde.* ’

RETROSPECT.

• I.

*Out of the plain, the forests, and the fields
 From the dissolving ledge whereon I stand
 An instant's flight confronted by the mist
 Impenetrably before me, vision yields
 To backward glancing a mysterious land
 Where with my muted being I keep tryst.*

II.

*That it was I who joyed and sorrowed there
 With dreams now unfamiliar, pleasures reft
 And pains outgrown, with comrades Time the thief,
 Like wintry blast on branches, has stripped bare
 Seems to the throbbing vision of the theft
 A convulsion past all Truth's belief.*

III.

*Strange hillocks sharply from the plain arise
 And windings of scarce noted lanes are strong
 Where that which was so dominant now is lost
 Within the distant haze : proportion dies,
 Some wrongs are changed to rights, some rights to wrong
 And little lingers visible at cost.*

IV.

*Yet is the sky a constancy, the light
 That glorifies the meanest earthly thing
 Glows with a deepening radiance as the day
 Draws surely onward towards the arms of Night
 Wherein all colours blend, all echoes wing
 Through maze of harmony their heavenward way.*

GORELL.

THE FAIRIES.

BY G. M. BARNES.

MODERN youth has been brought up to believe that the Fairies were a race of beneficent Little Beings always on the alert to do kindly actions to deserving mortals.

Unfortunately historical research proves that this is far from being correct. On the contrary, it seems that Good Fairies were the exception, and Spiteful Fairies the rule.

This distressing truth comes as a great shock to most of us. Where, we ask, are the Fairy Godmothers of our nursery tales, those helpful creatures always at hand to rescue the Youngest Son in his many adventures, and succour the down-trodden Stepchildren? Though these shining examples of the Good Fairy were well known in nursery lore, they must have been strictly limited in number, for ordinary Folk-lore contains few references to any kindly deeds of the Fairy race, and those few are usually the reward for propitiatory offerings.

The origin of the belief in Fairies is somewhat obscure. They seem to have been known from the very earliest times. The probability is that there was originally a dwarf race living in caves and holes of the earth, which gave rise to legends of a supernatural character. Traces of these legends can be found in Japan and Africa, as well as in the Far North and in Greece. Aristotle referred to 'A race of little men who have small houses and live in holes.'

Belief in Fairies was more or less general in Britain up to the time of the Tudors :

*But since of late Elizabeth,
And later James came in,
They never daunc'd on any heath
As when the time hath bin.*

Nevertheless, in some parts of the country faith in the 'little people' still persists, notably in the Highlands and Ireland, Dartmoor, and parts of Wales and Cornwall. Sussex, too, is one of the Fairies' special demesnes. Each country has its own species of Fairy, and even in Britain the little creatures vary in different parts. Ireland has its Leprechauns, Dartmoor its Pixies, and there are many others, such as Elves, Trolls, Spriggans, Gnomes, and Brownies. The Dartmoor Pixie, moreover, is not identical with his Cornish cousin, the Piskie.

Of these varying sprites, the only really trustworthy members are those delightful little people the Brownies, who possess strong domestic instincts and frequently assist the housewife by sweeping the room, or laundering the linen overnight. The various other classes are extremely mischievous, and sometimes definitely malicious, and all need to be treated with the greatest respect and consideration.

In the Middle Ages Fairy Glens were numerous, and cottagers living near them were obliged to protect their children carefully, as otherwise they might be enticed away, and 'changelings'—Fairy children—substituted. Fortunately it was possible to ensure adequate protection when passing these dangerous spots, either by wearing some garment—such as a coat, or stocking—inside out, or by carrying in the mouth a twig of rowan, cut in the month of May. Either of these precautions effectually prevented the wearer from being molested.

Fairy Rings may be seen at the present day. They consist of circles of mushrooms or toadstools in the fields, or else of circles of grass of a brighter green than the rest of the field. Either of these are sure indications that the Fairies have danced there overnight. So wary are the revellers, however, that it is almost impossible to see them unless possessed of

fern seed, which renders the holder invisible, though the wearing of a perfectly fitting set of foxglove bells on the fingers is considered by some people to be equally efficacious. There have been a few isolated instances of Fairies being seen apart from these precautions, but unfortunately the visionary did not know that to touch one of the Fairy possessions would have rendered it impossible for them to remove it, as any of their property touched by a mortal becomes accursed : so though he may have had a sight of the little people dancing in their red jerkins and green caps, nothing remained at daybreak to prove it was aught but a vision.

Near Alnwick, in Northumberland, there was a famous Fairy Ring, which local tradition decreed must never be run round more than nine times : to attempt a tenth encirclement would certainly incur some disaster.

Fairy Gold, that elusive substance which turns to ashes when found, is usually to be procured at an equally elusive spot—the foot of the Rainbow. Even in the time of the ancient Greeks it was a well-known illusion, and they had a saying concerning it, ‘*ἀνθρώποις ὁ θησαυρὸς πεφηνεν*’ (‘Our treasure turned out to be charcoal’).

Fairies needed constant propitiation in the old days. For instance, if a person came out of a house at night eating anything, he must throw a portion on the ground for them ; and old people used often to leave bread and potatoes on the table overnight lest the Fairies should wish to sup, carefully giving the residue to the fowls in the morning. A baked cake may be bodily removed in the night, unless a piece is previously cut out for the Fairy feasters. Should anyone be careless enough to upset the milk, he must at once say ‘There’s a dry heart waiting for it,’ which will persuade the Fairies to overlook the matter ; otherwise he will be in disgrace, for they hate all forms of dirt or slovenliness. Consequently the

hearth must always be swept clean at night, as they may wish to come and sit by the fire, which they could not possibly do if the ashes were about. Neglect of this simple precaution has often caused the cream to be turned sour in the dairy by some enraged Fay. At Christmas time it was especially necessary to clean the whole house scrupulously.

Whilst carelessness in household matters caused the Fairies such concern, diligence was often rewarded by them, for an old song runs :

*And if the house is swept
And from uncleanness kept
We praise the household maid
And duly she is paid :
Every night before we go
We drop a tester in her shoe.*

A tester was valued at 6*d.* to 9*d.*, but another account puts the rate of payment rather lower :

*These make our girls their slutt'ry rue,
By pinching them both black and blue ;
And put a penny in their shoe
The house for cleanly keeping.*

Any dirty water must be always thrown away overnight. Particularly did Fairies dislike water in which feet had been washed. Neither could they endure the smell of fish, or the the savour of salt or grease.

People who wash their hair at night must be sure to eat or drink something, when it is dry, before going to bed, otherwise they may be spirited away before morning. In Ireland, it is also essential to burn all hair cuttings.

Fairies have many tricks for deluding the human race. Most people know of the will-o'-the-wisp, that mischievous pixie who lures belated travellers into bogs and marshes with

his dancing lantern, but perhaps it is not so well known that if anyone calls a friend by name at night out of doors, he can only be sure that it is not a Fairy impersonator replying if the person addressed answers three times. Fairies are prohibited from replying more than twice. (Perhaps here we may trace some vague reference to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity ?)

No mention must be made of Fairies on Mondays or Thursdays without saying the incantation, ' My back to them, my face from them.'

The Fairy tribe are very jealous of the rights of property, therefore when intending to build a house, it is as well to turn up the sods at the four corners when the ground measurement has been taken, and to leave them all night. Should you happen to have pitched on a Fairy walk, the sods will be replaced by morning : and no house will prosper, or indeed be allowed to remain, if built on such a site. There is a legend that Wendover Church was so treated. Each time the foundations were laid, they were found removed in the morning, till at last the site had to be altered, and placed a short distance away, after which the builders were allowed to proceed in peace !

In Shropshire it was said that anyone walking at night three times round a field where cattle graze may see the Fairies. In this favoured county a Fairy grindstone has actually been dug up, with a hole in the middle to fit a tiny handle. Anyone who is lucky enough to find a Fairy knife, and sharpen it on this grindstone, will have a weapon which will infallibly kill all his enemies.

In Cornwall the Trolls have a fondness for stealing corn, and the careful farmer sows his seed cross-wise, which renders it secure from their thievish plans. Cornish sprites seem to have had a respect for religion, for the Spriggans were known to hold a midnight Mass in the mines on the night of Christ-

mas Eve. On this night, Shakespeare tells us, the Fairies have no power, when the cock, 'the bird of dawning, singeth all night long.' But on the eve of May Day, they had special powers, and it was customary to put branches of rowan and elder over the stable doors, for otherwise the exhausted horses would be found in the morning, with their manes knotted into miniature stirrups, having been galloped about mercilessly all night by elfin riders. Similar safeguards were placed over the cattle sheds, and the dairymaids would smear tar over the cows' ears, to prevent the elves from stealing the milk.

Fairies have a particular affection for the hawthorn tree, and like to hide and gambol under its branches, and it needs little imagination to fancy them pelting each other with its snowy petals. Southey, however, claims preference for the oak :

*It ever has been deemed their fav'rite tree :
They love to lie and rock upon its leaves
And bask them in the sunshine.*

Are there any believers in Fairies now ? Judging by the ecstatic response when Tinker Bell's fate is annually in the balance, there must be yet many Fairy lovers. Perhaps only the Good Fairies survive, for despite all evidence to the contrary we still think of them chiefly as charming Little Beings, painting the freckles on the cowslips, and ringing the blue-bells in the woods in spring.

THE QUEEN 'DIANA.'

A VOYAGE ON THE GOTHA CANAL.

BY E. V. LUCAS.

MY exploration of the Gotha Canal was, I must say at once, a matter of pure chance ; but never has chance been more fortunate. All reservations for a visit to Stockholm had been made, but when, on the Thursday evening, I descended at the aerodrome, I found that through a misunderstanding as to dates and the presence of two or three crowded Conferences in the city, no proper rooms were available, nor would there be any until Tuesday. 'But,' said the hotel clerk who with great difficulty had provided a temporary lodging, 'why not go by train to Gothenburg, see the place and come back on the *Diana*, which leaves on Sunday morning and arrives in Stockholm on Tuesday evening ? I will telephone.'

He telephoned, and in a few minutes all was arranged ; and I, who had never before been to Sweden and expected to see only Stockholm and neighbourhood, was to cross the country from the North Sea to the Baltic—three hundred and fifty miles—and was to do this by lake and canal : a form of unhastening, meditative transit that I had always looked forward to with longing but had never sufficiently enjoyed. Not often does a registration muddle have such a happy ending.

Nor was there any hitch, any failure, in the scheme. The sky was without a cloud ; the voyage on the *Diana* was a three-day delight ; the lakes were visions of beauty ; and

all the officials concerned were capable and charming. Every hour I wondered less and less why the famous lady from Sweden who travelled by slow train to Weedon had returned so quickly to her native land.

Göteborg is at the opening of a natural harbour on the west coast, not many miles below Oslo, with a river full of masts and funnels, and an obelisk beside it, on which, looking out to sea, is the figure of one of the women who weep. If you drive to a place about an hour distant, where there is a restaurant on a rocky point, you too may watch the ships, great and small, as they steam in and out of the port.

Göteborg struck me as a contented, serious and prosperous city, with the usual Swedish fondness for sculpture, among its many statues being one of John Ericsson, the inventor. It has a University, large well-built houses, public gardens, and at any rate one book-shop, called Rumpert's, more welcoming than any in England that I can think of, where I found several shelves of nautical adventure and engineering, largely in English. 'We can sell any book about the sea,' said an assistant. They could sell also, I noticed, detective stories, chiefly by Edgar Wallace, while all our latest work, English and American, was represented. Rumpert's is at the lower corner of the broad street which, passing first a market and then a park, rises between private residences to the top of the hill. Here, completing the vista, is a vast and very modern brick building, up thousands of steps, in which Göteborg's art treasures are preserved. Having climbed these steps and paused (deceitfully) as if to collect the view, I found, inside, thousands more; but having surmounted them, there was the reward of pictorial profusion.

Swedish painting, which I was to see here and again in Stockholm, I do not too much esteem, particularly in its

most modern development ; but I was amused by the room devoted to Ivar Arosenius (1876-1909), a fantastic humorist who ought to have illustrated Heine and the brothers Grimm. Perhaps he did.

Sweden is a punctual land, and so, at ten o'clock precisely on the next morning, the *Diana's* moorings were cast off and she slid away from the quay. We were a considerable party at that time, for as it was Sunday a number of Gothenburghers were going by water as far as Trollhättan and then returning by train.

The only other naturally English-speaking passengers were two Americans, but the first officer had a few English words, although with little syntax, while the Captain could converse with most nations and was ready to do so. In fact, he quickly demonstrated his paternal qualities : patriarchal, I might almost say, for from the neighbouring fields the *Diana* must look very like the *Ark*. When not on navigation duty, Captain Borgquist, a gentle, deliberate, sagacious man, distilled information. 'That,' (for example) he said, pointing to huge chimneys towards which barges packed with logs had been advancing, 'that is a pulp factory' ; adding, with a sigh, 'People, I suppose, must have newspapers.' He had been, he told me, for twenty-seven years on the Canal, and before that, from a tender age, a sailor on the ocean wide. It was a joke among his friends that he was almost the double of Sir Edgar Britten (now, unhappily, the late), the Commander of his rival ship ; and he showed me a photograph to prove it. But for his knowledge, and readiness to impart it, the journey would have been only half as interesting. All our very nicest sailors, said a humorous Swedish gentleman to me, when they die are reincarnated as captains on the Gotha Canal.

But Captain Borgquist did not confine his helpfulness to

the deck. When at lunch-time, or 'middag,' as they say in Sweden, we descended to the saloon, a small room with an elasticity that made it always large enough, he demonstrated to those of us who were new to Swedish habits how to treat the cold-table.

For those who have not been to Sweden I should say that everywhere this buffet is an accessory to lunch, the chief meal of the day. As you enter the room, public or private; you go at once to the 'cold-table,' which is covered with salads, sandwiches, sliced herring, prawns, sausages and a score of other tempting things, and, taking a plate and a fork, make your choice; later, if you like, returning for more, as I must admit I often did. It is a most sensible custom, doing away with delays at a time when the system needs or appreciates them least, and completely removing that very bad quarter of an hour between ordering and eating, the emptiness of which is not appeased but aggravated by cocktails. Instead of waiting, in the English manner, for the waiter, one selects one's own food and begins to eat it at once. No wonder, I thought, the Swedes look so well.

The *Diana*, the Captain admitted, is not a *Queen Mary*—so far from it that I imagine a thousand *Dianas* could be put on one of *Queen Mary's* decks; but I doubt if the *Queen Mary* has been more clever with space. Although the *Diana* is only thirty yards long and twenty wide, she can house and feed forty-four persons, including a crew of nineteen. Like all Swedish canal and lake steamers, she is white.

I do not pretend that her bunks are luxurious, but in mine I slept the clock nearly round; and no one can say fairer than that. I do not pretend that the meals are exotic; but I always had hunger for them, and hunger, as Henry James once wrote, is the 'best sauce.' As a matter of fact, I thought the *Diana's* cook, who was a woman and elderly, one of the

best ; and I shall not soon forget the chicken (or kyckling) with apricots which she gave us on the first evening. Why the English abandoned *compotes* with meat I shall never understand. Dr. Johnson highly esteemed prunes with veal, but except among the other northern nations one sees prunes with veal no more.

Ever since early in the sixteenth century, efforts had been made to unite the North Sea and the Baltic, but it was not until 1832 that the communication was completed, a result due to the confidence and enthusiasm of Count Baltzar von Platen, who finished the work with the Östergötland stretch, assisted by our own Thomas Telford. But von Platen died in 1829, three years too early to witness the fruition of the task ; you may see the memorial to him, on the north bank at Motala, before you reach Lake Boren.

As we leave Gothenburg, the wharves and shipping and oil-tanks soon give place to meadows, and it is not long before the first exciting object, the deserted fortress of Bohus, is reached, a reminder of the time when there were wars here too. I say ' too,' because one of the reasons why the Northern Capitals have recently been so popular as resorts—and indeed why I myself was visiting them—is because they are peaceable. War and fears of war were elsewhere—but in Oslo there were none, in Stockholm none, in Copenhagen none : their conflicts were over. Yet of these conflicts Bohus, which was often besieged, is notably a relic, for it was built when the Gotha river was the boundary between Norway and Sweden and it was built by a Norwegian king. The boundary is now many miles north.

All these inland voyages have a certain similarity. The boat threads the scenery in the same placid steady way ; cottages—in Sweden chiefly red, the colour both of the wooden walls and the tiles—occur ; cattle occur ; peasants

work in the fields ; trees occur, rowans, birches, alders, birch—principally birch ; churches, with gleaming white towers and black spires, occur ; the great sky is over all. But the Gotha Canal voyage is unique in including so many locks and in reaching to a height of over ninety metres, while so much of it takes you across large and lovely lakes with forests on their margins. The lotus-eaters, I think, must now and then have exchanged the land for a canal-boat.

Wild fauna were not so plentiful as one could wish. I expected to see many herons, but for those birds I had to wait until, later, from a car, I saw a pair near Gränna. Rabbits, although, by air and rail, water and road, I travelled many hundred miles, I never saw at all, not one. The commonest birds are gulls and the black and grey hooded crow. There were, however, many wild duck which, at one of our moorings, in the hope of kitchen discards, descended from the sky and became tame. And at another—Motala, I think—two swans, also wild, and three cygnets came for food, completely ignoring the hosts of little black fish swimming, as we could see over the taffrail, all about them. And at Lake Roxen were mysterious diving birds, disappearing into the water at one spot, and after an unbelievable interval coming up who could say where.

In place of the birds that I had hoped would be so numerous, we had many dragon-flies hovering over the deck. How, therefore, could we be really disappointed ? And one other form of life that I remember—but I have no clear idea as to where it so suddenly and surprisingly appeared or on which of the three nebulous days—was a wherry, with white sails and green paint, called the *Daisy Boko*.

Our first disembarkation occurred on the Sunday afternoon, at Trollhättan, where there are waterfalls which man has harnessed, obtaining momentum enough to provide

electric light, and run trains, all over Sweden. The marvelous power-house must, of course, be seen : so we were told, and so we all gregariously believed, but I wish now that I had remained quietly on the *Diana* as she climbed the locks. Having seen Niagara itself and many dynamos and Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, what novelty could there be at Trollhättan :—while the motor-cars that whirled us from point to point were dangerous, and the official who accompanied us had too obviously said it all before. Also I had been enjoying the Sweden that was not mechanical and commercial and enterprising : enjoying it in the best of ways, from a deck-chair.

But as to leave the ship and take to taxis seemed to be the expected thing, we complied.

Trollhättan is certainly a wild spot, and the cataract which the locks have been made to conquer or correct is as unlike the calm of the canal as anything could be ; the cavity which the Kings and Queens of Sweden have autographed has a certain interest ; and the prospect from the summit of a mountain to which we were taken is superb. But already my heart was *Diana's*. Already to sit at ease and watch Sweden glide slowly by had become a cherished habit.

Our treachery to the boat was indeed well punished, for after crossing a bridge at the top of the falls, with the gigantic head of a Viking carved on it, we were all deposited on the quay, above the locks where level water begins again, a good half-hour too soon, and no one, not even the guide, could say whether or not there was time for tea at a neighbouring hotel. We therefore had none ; but in company with three little Trollhättan girls and two little Trollhättan boys, who thought our clothes, or faces, or both, grotesque, and whispered and giggled about them, we waited until the white bows of the *Diana* welcomely appeared. Only five

or six hours had passed since her ropes had been loosed at Gothenburg, but she was already our home.

It was at Vadstena on the second day, early in the afternoon, that we disembarked again. For two or three hours, as we approached across that inland sea, Lake Vättern, we had been seeing the Renaissance spires rising above the walls and bastions of a castle, and, from the informative captain, knew them to be the old castle of Vadstena and the old Convent of St. Bridget ; and these we were now to visit on foot. But first let me remark that at the same time that we entered Vadstena from Gothenburg, one of the *Diana's* sister boats, the *Juno*, was entering from Stockholm, this being the point where the east-bound and west-bound craft always meet ; and I was pleased to reflect (naturally) how much better captain and cook, first officer and stewardesses, were ours.

The moated castle of Vadstena, begun in 1545 by King Gustavus Vasa, turns out to be now a very shallow building, the result of a fire in 1598, and it is a stronghold no more, except for archives ; but in its day it was a splendid home. Halls and a chapel are still shown, but the glory has departed. As a commanding landmark, however, the castle of Vadstena is not to be surpassed, and I was glad to be moored under its walls.

At St. Bridget's Church, the other lion, about a quarter of a mile away, we found a lady seated in the churchyard, who, rising at our approach, suddenly became a pleasant guide, with just enough English, prettily broken, to make things clear.

St. Bridget of Sweden, it seems, was an extraordinary woman, something of a St. Catherine of Siena. Born in the fourteenth century, she began with a life of customary usefulness, first as the daughter of a powerful judge and

landowner in Uppland, and then as the wife of Ulf Gudmarson, Lord of Nericia, and as the mother of eight children ; and she would have died merely as a pious and charitable widow had she not enjoyed spiritual revelations, the record of which became a very popular book among those who see visions or believe that visions have been seen. But her fame rests chiefly as the founder of the Order of St. Saviour, or Bridgittines, whose headquarters were here, at Vadstena. The old lady's last years were spent at Rome, where she died in 1373. She was canonised by Boniface IX in 1391, and her day is October the eighth.

The Blue Church, as St. Bridget's is also called, from the tint of the stone, is empty yet magnificent, very simple, with groinings picked out with brickwork, large unstained windows, and a resonant echo. Now Lutheran in religion, it preserves many traces of the Old Persuasion, and there are also two wooden statues of St. Bridget, one in which she is purely ecclesiastical, reading Holy Writ, while the other displays her in an ecstasy. Elsewhere I found an engaging little figure of the Madonna and Child, to supply a more human touch, and on the north wall there is an intricate carved altar-piece from the distant Roman Catholic past.

The Bridgittines, I find, spread to other lands, in the reign of Henry V collecting in England in a convent at Syon near London. When, however, Protestantism was established here, under Elizabeth, the Bridgittines left Syon for the Continent, but in 1861 they returned and now practise their benefactions at Syon House at Chudleigh in Devonshire.

The third time on which the *Diana's* passengers had the chance of walking on shore was at Berg, when, also on the second day, the boat enters the first of the five locks that enable her to go downstairs to Lake Roxen. It is a strange experience, after descending the steep slopes to the edge of

the lake, where I found some youths, with engoldened limbs, bathing under the sloping rays of the sun, to look back and see one's own ship high up in the landscape.

Much of the last day is spent in threading the way into the Baltic through the thousand islands of the Swedish Archipelago, some of them inhabited, some of them carrying only beacons, some mere rocks, but all of them offering basking shoreland for seals ; and at half-past six we were in the centre of Stockholm, opposite the great Venetian town hall. The adventure, alas ! was over.

This was my first long voyage on a canal-boat, and I hope that it will not be the last ; in fact, I have already my plans to return to Sweden and to make the reverse journey from Stockholm to Gothenburg, as well as that between Jönköping and Stockholm by one of the allied services. With such a brief experience one perhaps ought not to generalise, but I can affirm that for a new kind of peace and repose—almost soporific repose—the Gotha Canal trip is perfect. Short excursions by Sweden's myriad steamers are refreshing to the eyes ; but what one needs is time to settle down, and that is what the *Diana* dispenses. During the whole journey of three hundred and forty-seven miles the boat, which carries goods as well as passengers and has a time-table to keep, is always moving : a solemn thought when one realises what one missed during the two nights. For the idea of missing anything is infuriating. But move on she must, and all that one knows of her nocturnal progress comes from the sound of her warning bell, the sudden stillness as she enters a lock, and the grinding of the fenders against the walls in the narrowest places. Shouting there is none ; whatever the lock-keepers have to say to the man-at-the-wheel, or the man-at-the-wheel has to say to the lock-keepers, is said softly. Why, once, when a wherry ahead,

after persistently disregarding our signals so that we might pass, at last grudgingly made room, our captain merely threw the wherry's captain a silent look of reproach ; whereas on the Thames (and possibly on the Hudson) there would have been verbal fireworks.

This is no place to write about a city which demands many superlatives all to itself ; but I should like just to say that although it may suffer from rain and wind, and in winter it can be intensely cold, I shall always think of Stockholm as it was in September of 1936, under a deep-blue sky, amid its sparkling or placid waters, with its cheerful people, its noble buildings, its noiseless streets, and on the walls no posters enticing us to enrich brewers, distillers or tobacconists.

A PILGRIM HEART.

*When homesick eyes have once beheld the sweep
Of England's fields, her vaulted hills and lanes
Alight with blossoms gay, the while the panes
Of thatched-roof cottages reflect the leap
And play of sunset's crimson-fathomed deep,
No other love of land nor sea enchains,
No other side of life than this remains
For all the alien years their silence keep
And solace comes from well-remembered things—
Tokens that span the lapse of years apart ;
When memory is given pulse and wings
All vistas save this blessed one depart,
Time plays a closing chord with muted strings
And home once more returns a pilgrim heart.*
Chicago. EDITH STURGIS

GRIMALDI.

BY E. T. S. DUGDALE.

JUST a century ago, on the 31st of May, 1837, there died a man who in the years of his strength dominated the profession that lives by providing laughter, and left behind him a tradition and ideal for his successors in that art. He was Joseph Grimaldi, the son of an Italian comic actor and dancer, Guiseppe Grimaldi.

Ever since the sixteenth century the names of Pantaloon and Arlequin (variously spelt Harlakean—Harlicken—Harlaken), introduced into England by the then fashionable Italian comic actors, had been familiar to Englishmen. By the end of the seventeenth, Columbine and Clown had become an essential element of Harlequinade. The action consisted mainly of rough horseplay and buffeting, without much special artistic arrangement. But the general line was that of Harlequin and Columbine eloping together, and outwitting Columbine's father, Pantaloon, and other pursuers at every turn. Clown was the loutish, half-witted servant of Harlequin.

Guiseppe Grimaldi settled in London, and in the 1750's was engaged by Rich, the manager of Covent Garden Theatre. (Rich it was who staged Gay's *Beggars' Opera*, and gave rise to the popular saying that it 'made Gay rich and Rich gay.')

Rich and Guiseppe Grimaldi between them introduced a new style of Harlequinade with acrobatic dancing and the mechanical tricks, which in after years Joe Grimaldi was to elaborate by his own brilliant inventive talent.

Joseph Grimaldi was born in London in 1778, the son of Guiseppe Grimaldi and a dancer, named Mr^s. Brooker. He was introduced to the stage at Covent Garden before he was three years old, and thereafter continued to appear in every variety of comic part at that theatre, at Drury Lane, or at Sadler's Wells for the following twenty-two years. He had a round face with full lips, and large bright eyes. He could stretch his mouth till it seemed to reach right across his countenance, and added to his comicality by lengthening his chin. His voice was rich, and the songs he sang on the stage added greatly to his fame and popularity. His frame was short and muscular, an essential asset in the life of an actor who on every night of the theatrical year had to perform acrobatic dances, tumbles and falls, and at the same time keep the house in a roar of laughter with his tricks, grimaces, jokes and songs.

Until about the year 1822—four years after Joe Grimaldi's active career was at an end—the Harlequinade followed the Burlesque throughout the year, and the strain on these comic actors was terrific. Grimaldi, strong as he was, eventually broke down under it, and his last few years on the stage were attended by intense muscular pains after each performance. Since that date the Harlequinade has been confined more and more to the Christmas Pantomime, and the tradition of Clown's sufferings and sorrows in private life, immortalised by Dickens in *The Pickwick Papers*, became less of a reality.

Grimaldi learned the Clown's art first from his father, and later from a veteran Drury Lane Clown named Dubois. There was also a Columbine, the 'ever sportive, elegant and flexile Mrs. Wybrow,' who gave displays with the broadsword; from her Grimaldi learned the art of stage swordsmanship. In the romantic drama of *Lodoiska* at

Drury Lane, he fought on the parapet of a burning castle, and then had to continue fighting crawling along the ground. It is said that Edmund Kean learned his famous crawling fight in *Richard III* by watching Grimaldi in this act.

Mechanical pantomime tricks were the order of the day, and Grimaldi spent much ingenuity throughout his life in inventing new ones. In the British Museum there is an entry in a scrap-book, probably in his handwriting, referring to a trick performed in the Sadler's Wells Burlesque, *Chaos; or, Harlequin Phaeton*. The trick consisted of changing a pot of beer into a woman without a head; the announcements describing it as a 'comparison between a pot of beer without a head and a good woman.'

The style of the jokes was neither deep nor intellectual, and it appears that the tricks were not meant to deceive in the sense that conjuring tricks are intended to provide mystification. The art of clowning aimed at producing a quick laugh from the whole audience at once. The saying that 'a joke is a joke only once, if then' does not apply to Pantomime. There the old jokes which the audience recognise at once are the ones that tell. There is also an art governing blows and falls. An audience must not receive the suggestion of real or serious injury. A blow or a fall on the backside is purely funny, for it has no association with real damage to the human frame. There is a similar difference between a blow from a clenched fist and a slap with the palm of the hand. Noise is also an important element for producing laughter. Harlequin's double lath, or slap-stick, has for two centuries served the purpose of combining the maximum of noise with the minimum of blow. The crashing of dozens of plates in the act usually entitled *Breaking up the Happy Home* has never

failed to delight our music-hall audiences. Surprise too plays an important part. The writer remembers the audience being immensely tickled by a very simple act by Mr. W. H. Berry years ago. He advanced to the front of the stage displaying a scarlet handkerchief, which he dropped behind the footlights; he stooped and picked up a green one. Such are the elements of the art of amusing a crowd already disposed to be amused. The simpler the better. In our own day the Woodbine, the Baby Austin, and for some reason the mere mention of the town of Wigan, are enough to produce a laugh. 'We shall 'ave to walk to Wigan.'

The year 1806 marks a new era in the history of Clowning. In that year Thomas Dibdin staged *Harlequin and Mother Goose; or, the Golden Egg*, at Covent Garden. It was deliberately put on without the customary splendour of former years, and depended on the talent of the individual actors. The piece is described by Mr. M. Willson Disher in his *Clowns and Pantomimes*.

'Grimaldi's part was Squire Bugle, "a rich widower of repulsive manners," who attempts to steal Colinette from the arms of Colin. But his scheme is foiled by Mother Goose, whom he had condemned to the ducking-stool. In revenge she raises the ghost of his first wife, and gives to Colin the goose that lays the golden eggs. Colinette's avaricious father, however, will not agree to the marriage of the young lovers unless the bird is cut open. Colin consents, Mother Goose appears, and all the characters are changed into the creatures of the Harlequinade. Grimaldi (as Clown) is caught gloating at the sight of a meal by Harlequin, who sends the table into "the flies." Clown, in consternation, walks underneath and around where it stood, looks up and sees it, gives a shout of surprise, seats himself when it descends, only to find himself rising with it, chair and all. After Pantaloon has been similarly sent aloft, Harlequin dines with Columbine. While the servants

are cutting down Pantaloon, Clown pelts them with plates. Pantaloon cuts a pie ; out walks a duck ; Clown makes off with it. They enter a farmyard and are chased out by the bees. They throw a basket over a postman ; a blackamoor's head comes out ; Clown hits it with a board ; the board breaks in two ; they disguise themselves as Pandean Minstrels and gain admission to Vauxhall Gardens. Meanwhile the chase of the young lovers has been continuing—at one point they escape by substituting themselves for the figures striking the chimes of St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street—until Mother Goose changes them all back to their original shapes, and while a submarine palace is being "set," makes a speech with a line for Grimaldi's benefit :

‘ “ *You, soon restored to person, house and lands,
Shall, like a hearty English squire, shake hands.* ”

‘ There is no need to read between the lines to discover that the virtue of “ Mother Goose ” was Grimaldi pure and simple. His “ hearty English ” humour in pocketing a duck or in the way he put on a cocked hat made his managers a fortune of £20,000—“ more rather than less,” Dibdin says.’

For the next nineteen years Grimaldi was the only Clown for the Londoners, and the impression he made on them survived long after his infirmities forced him to cease amusing them in person. His keen satire won him the appellation of ‘ Hogarth in action.’ He was, in the words of a passage quoted by Mr. D. Willson Disher,

‘ the very *beau ideal* of thieves—robbery became a science in his hands—you forgave the larceny, for the humour with which it was perpetrated. He abstracted a leg of mutton from a butcher's tray with such a delightful assumption of nonchalance—he threw such plump stupidity into his countenance, whilst the slyness of observation lurked in his half-closed eyes—he extracted a watch, or a handkerchief, with such a bewitching eagerness, with such a devotion

to his task, and yet kept his wary eye upon the victim of his trickery—he seemed so imbued with the spirit of speculation, that you saw it in him merely as a portion of his nature, and for which he was neither blameable nor accountable.’

To these attractions he added buffetings, and the acrobatic antics and tumbles from serious heights, which while they delighted his public, contributed, as time went on, to impair his health and shorten his career.

He was continually inventing new effects, being at the same time careful not to wander away from reality in too extravagant a fashion. There is, for instance, a print of him driving a tandem of dogs on to the stage, with a cock perched on his own head and on the backs of each of the dogs. He varied the old Italian device of cutting up a man, putting him together again, and bringing him to life, in various ways. For instance, in a shopping scene, ‘he stole a beadle’s hat, a milliner’s box, a salmon’s head, and a pair of boots, and made an effigy of them,’ and then sprang away in pretended fear when Harlequin’s wand brought the whole to life.

The audiences were intensely critical, and even rowdy if they disapproved of a performance. On one occasion they became actually destructive, and were only appeased when the manager came forward with a promise to take the piece off.

In 1809 J. P. Kemble reopened Covent Garden (which had been burned down the previous year) with *Macbeth*, and a musical after-piece named *The Quaker*. The prices of admission were raised, and this caused such indignation that for a number of nights the rioting made acting impossible. The scenes were known as the O.P. (Old Price) Rows. Kemble, hoping to appease the playgoers without giving up his point, put on the tragic pantomimic ballet of

Don Juan, with Grimaldi as Scaramouch ; but even so, after one quiet night, the rowdyism began afresh, and was only terminated on the management promising to lower the price of admission to the pit.

Grimaldi's popularity on the stage continued unabated, but it was paid for by a steady decline in health. From 1818 onwards he was subject to severe muscular cramp after each performance, which for some time was kept under by constant massage of his limbs. The last two years of his active career were sheer torture to him, until in 1825 he had no alternative but to retire altogether. His one preoccupation thenceforward was his son, and he spent much ingenuity in inventing new pantomime tricks, which he offered to managers on condition that his son was engaged to perform them. His wife's health also was a constant source of anxiety during those later years.

In his youth he had made a hobby of collecting insects and butterflies in the country round the metropolis, but this came to an end in 1797, when a gang of burglars broke in to his house, and smashed up all that they could not carry away, including his collection of flies. He never started a fresh one ; so this interest which might have amused him when he could no longer amuse the public was denied to him.

He had been unable to put by much of the money he earned in his triumphant career. Expenses incurred through his son and various unfortunate theatrical ventures had drained a large part of his savings. A farewell benefit performance was arranged for him on June 27, 1828, during which, being unable to stand, he went through a scene seated in a chair with some of his old spirit, and followed it with a moving speech of farewell. The house was crowded and the net proceeds gave him the sum of £270.

Grimaldi was twice married. His first wife was Maria, the daughter of Mr. Hughes, proprietor of the Weymouth Theatre and owner of a fourth share in the Sadler's Wells Theatre. They were married in 1798, but the following year she died in childbirth. It was not long before Grimaldi married again. We find him in 1813 occupied with the education of a son, J. S. Grimaldi, aged twelve, who at an early age displayed a talent for music and dancing; and it was the father's hope that the son would carry on the tradition of clownship to another generation. But the son had not the father's strength of character. After a few years of success on the stage he developed a weakness for drink and bad company, and Grimaldi had the sorrow of seeing his son fall lower and lower, and finally die in 1832. His second wife died two years later.

The last five years of his life were spent at Clerkenwell, in the near neighbourhood of Sadler's Wells, where indeed most of his life had been spent. Real country, of course, was then much more accessible than it is nowadays, and he spent many lonely hours wandering in the fields and by the stream running through the district. In 1836 he decided to write his *Life and Adventures*. When these were completed, he was unable to find a publisher ready to accept them in the form he had given them. In March, 1837, he therefore commissioned a friend, Thomas Egerton Wilks, to remodel the work. Mr. Wilks rewrote it in the third person, cut out some portions and added stories gleaned from Grimaldi's own lips. Grimaldi died two months after this work was begun, and the control of it passed into the hands of his executor, Richard Hughes, his first wife's brother and his friend through life. This gentleman sold the work to the firm of George Routledge & Sons, who commissioned Charles Dickens to rewrite it. The style is

pure Dickens. The new author found himself involved in a considerable amount of research. Many of the data given by Grimaldi, especially for the earlier part of his life, were incorrect in detail, as the numerous footnotes prove. But the whole presents a picture of a man of simple, direct character, with an amazing fund of patience and forgiveness under many a trial due to professional jealousy and spite, and to various personal misfortunes. He had many devoted, lifelong friends, and his fame and popularity with his public never knew a reverse. Many clowns after him were not less dexterous and acrobatic, but very few of them possessed the jovial comicality with which every slightest movement or word of his set the whole theatre in a roar. He had established Clown as the outstanding figure in the Harlequinade, and that he has remained during the century since Grimaldi died.

RECOGNITION.

*She came across a sudden hill,
Wind on her brow ; my heart stood still.
The breeze was wanton with a tress
Coaxed from her modest shawl's duress ;
Silken that strand of faery hair,
Dark in the sun as she was fair—
I stood, and could not move from there.*

ÚI BRIÚIN.

Dublin.

THE SPECTRE IN THE FLAMES.

BY ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

INSECT life is very prevalent in New Guinea, and some forms of it are touchingly close in their attachments to human beings. To us, however, spiders were the most annoying pests. Those creatures somehow got into our stores and everything that we cooked and we could not help swallowing them sometimes. Still, I suppose, even spiders have their uses. At any rate they kept down other pests by casting over the outside of undergrowths and forest entanglements coarse webs like fishing nets which caught and held many forms of life which, otherwise, might have bit, stung, burrowed or sucked into our skins, and perhaps we ought to have been grateful for their presence.

But we were not interested in spiders or other insects that afternoon when we camped on a beach of sand by the side of a shallow fast-flowing stream. They were unpleasant accompaniments of a gold-seeker's life and were ignored as much as possible. Our interest was in the stretch of sand upon which we had camped, for we had washed out a few pans of it and had found it surprisingly rich in gold. Probably the gold had been deposited there a million years or so before we had come that way, but none of us cared to argue as to the date of its origin. It was there and nothing else mattered.

'It is a pity that we didn't strike this patch of sand nearer the beginning of our trip instead of a day's journey or so from the coast at the end,' Big Sam remarked, brushing a cloud of mosquitoes from his perspiring face. 'There seems

to be more gold in that sand than we have run across anywhere.'

'I wonder why this place has not been worked out before this?' said Sydney Charlie puzzledly. 'We can't now be far from some of the older white man's camps, and how this place wasn't struck by wandering prospectors before our time beats me to guess—'

'Maybe the pests were so bad in this place that any men passing through this way didn't stop long enough to see what lay in the sand,' Wolfram Dick broke in, as he pushed his hand through a web an energetic spider was actually weaving before our eyes between his rifle and a fallen tree-limb against which it was leaning. 'I never was in a bit of country so crowded with skeeters and other biting and stinging insects.'

The three other members of the party did not air their views at that time. Mac was engaged in mixing a floury concoction for our evening meal, the Professor was watching the movements of a gorgeous butterfly that had got in some spider-net entanglements, and I was washing out a panful of sand from which I eventually obtained five grains of gold. Before I had finished my work the others, excepting Mac, who continued cooking operations, had also employed themselves in testing the sands, and by sundown we had proved that they were abnormally rich in gold for over five hundred yards up and down the waterway.

We dined well that evening at sundown, Big Sam having shot a wild pig earlier in the day, and being now near the end of our prospecting journey we could use up our reserve of tinned stores, and after the meal was over we lay back upon our blankets and smoked native tobacco given us in the last friendly village through which we had passed. As was our custom when in unknown country, we extinguished

our camp fire when it had ceased to be necessary for light-giving purposes, but had kindled several 'smudge fires' beside our sleeping place so as to ward off the night pests; yet, despite the smoke, those insect creatures wandered over our faces and explored regions underneath our garments, leaving intense skin-irritation in their tracks. The night was dark and, but for the splashing sounds of crocodiles in the deeper pools of the river, silent, and after the Professor had talked to non-attentive listeners about what he thought the part of the world known as New Guinea was like before it had assumed its present form, and that same audience had discussed animatedly the probabilities of a team of New Guinean savages being able to beat the selected cricket teams from all other parts of the British Empire, we dropped off to slumber.

And while we slept the stars of tropical night moved through the heavens and a watcher might have thought that all New Guinea was resting. But it was not. Some time towards morning an unearthly yell shattered the atmosphere and broke in on our sleeping senses. We sat up and seized our rifles in the belief that we had been attacked by natives. My senses were dazed, but they were sufficiently active for me to realise that no howling horde of savages was rushing upon us. Still, something had happened or was happening, and it was a few seconds before it dawned on my mind that the cause of our alarm was actually before my eyes. I was gazing at a native in full war adornments who was standing amidst a mass of flames in the heart of the tall unbroken bush which fringed the waterway like a hedge. This figure evidently had been the source of the awful yell, and it was poised like a statue with arm outstretched pointing a spear in the direction of down-stream, plainly indicating that we should go away at once. I wondered vaguely why the warrior in

the flames did not burn away, and suddenly a cold perspiration broke out all over me—I was looking at something not earthly !

‘He can’t be real,’ Big Sam muttered, rubbing his eyes. ‘No living man could stand in that burning bush without being consumed.’

‘That thing is a ghost !’ Wolfram Dick whispered. ‘The magic-men of some of the tribes can make them.’

‘Most wonderful !’ I heard the Professor exclaim. ‘What do you think of that apparition, Mac ?’

‘I’ve never seen a ghost and I don’t believe in them, but—but—I *see* that flaming “thing” in the bush over there, and maybe there are “things” on earth that are beyond our comprehension although we have five senses.’ The big Scot spoke in tones I had never heard him use before and I looked round at him in amazement. He was staring fixedly at the ghostly warrior and, clearly, he could not account for its presence. Probably, I thought, he, a man who did not know what physical fear meant, had in his boyhood days in far-away Scotland been impressed by tales of the supernatural handed down by his ancestors.

‘If you think we had better go away, Mac,’ I said in almost inaudible words, and was surprised myself by their sound, ‘we can leave now. We don’t need the gold we might get here anyhow, and we can’t fight ghosts—’

‘Maybe not,’ Mac interrupted in less gloomy tones, ‘but before we run away from this place we’ll try the effect of our rifles upon that blazing warrior. Personally, I’ve never bolted from anything living, and I don’t think that anything dead will make me learn the running-away business—’

‘Look, mates !’ Sydney Charlie broke in. ‘The blamed ghost has lowered its spear, and the flames are dying out !’

I turned my eyes on the spectre again, conscious that all

my mates were also looking at it, and as we gazed it slowly disappeared before our eyes like a picture dissolving on the screen, and next moment the flames too died out.

We continued staring at the blackness where the spectre had been until Wolfram Dick startled all with a laugh. 'I'm mighty glad that all you fellows saw that ghost thing as well as me,' he said. 'If it had been seen by myself only and I had told you about it, you would have said that I was yarning again. Maybe now you'll believe me when I tell you that if we knew the insect that we must have swallowed in that damper we ate to-night we could make a lot of money with its cousins down in Brisbane or Sydney. That insect can make a man see things better than the stuff he gets out of bottles.'

'Do you mean that that ghost we saw was imagination only?—' I began.

'Indigestion,' Wolfram Dick corrected, with another laugh. 'It was brought on by some insect in our food.'

'I have never heard of mass indigestion,' said the Professor musingly. 'Of course, we know that the famous mango-trick is a result of mass hypnotism—'

'I don't believe that what we saw was due to any kind of indigestion or to any insect getting into what we ate,' Mac interrupted, rather heatedly, but as he had been cook that afternoon we thought that his objection to Wolfram Dick's explanation was only natural, and after some more talk we lay down on our blankets and, relieved by the thought that only a form of indigestion had caused us to be disturbed, slept until sunrise. Before breakfast in the morning we put any remaining doubts of Wolfram Dick's explanation at rest by making a tour of the river bank and by closely inspecting the long unbroken wall of foliage which fringed it. We had fancied we had seen the spectre in a gap of the

leafy wall, but no gap could be seen, nor were there any signs of the bush having been burnt. Indeed, it was evident to us all that no part of the wall of vegetation had ever been on fire. It stretched up and down the river as far as we could see—a dense, impenetrable hedge—and the entire face of it was covered, as we had first seen it, with a network of spider-webs which could not have escaped being broken or burnt had there been a flaming spectre or anything on fire where the vision had appeared.

‘There was nothing living there, mates,’ Big Sam summed up, as we returned to the camp fire and prepared breakfast.

‘I am of the same opinion,’ said Mac hesitatingly. ‘But there may have been something *not* living?’

‘Well,’ Big Sam laughed. ‘We’ve wandered the length and breadth of New Guinea looking for gold and have got into a lot of tight corners. But we, somehow, got out of them all, and now that we’ve struck the richest gold patch I’ve ever seen, I don’t think I’d leave it for all the ghosts in the world.’

‘So you think in daytime, Sam, and perhaps we all think so too,’ the Professor said, ‘but night often makes one think differently.’

No one else commented on anything, but Mac was very thoughtful during the meal, and when the Professor abstractedly examined the mechanism of his rifle, all began to see that theirs were in working order. No one believed in ghosts, but a loaded rifle was always better than an empty one!

After breakfast we began washing out the gold from the sands in our pans and soon had every reason to be delighted with the results we obtained. In my first pan I had about half a shovelful of sand, and when I had reduced the bulk by a series of concentric jerks, I saw that a ‘tail’ of gold lay on

the bottom of the pan which I estimated to be about half an ounce in weight ! A rough calculation then showed that I was working among sand that yielded over 200 ounces of gold to the ton, and, as my comrades were getting approximately the same returns, it seemed a certainty that each man could earn about a hundred pounds a day. We might multiply the figure by ten, probably, when we built some form of 'cradle' or other gold-saving apparatus with the timber we could cut down. Early in the forenoon we tested the sands for about half a mile up the waterway, and the gold obtained was positive proof that the auriferous patch would never play out by our efforts alone. We had not even in our wildest dreams imagined that such a wealth of gold so easily obtainable existed anywhere, and we could not understand why the sand patch, being comparatively near established gold-mining camps, had not been found before. The place would now be rushed by gold-seekers when they heard of its wonderful wealth, but, as we did not intend to go down to the nearest camp for stores until we absolutely required such, we could not be followed back for a long time.

'Maybe some people *did* see this place before us,' Sydney Charlie reasoned, laying down his washing pan and clearing some flies from his eyes, 'but when they swallowed some of the pests and saw a ghost or two they ran away. They wouldn't have a man like Wolfram Dick among them to tell them of indigestion.'

'I don't think prospectors would run away from gold even if all the trees were ghosts, Charlie,' Mac said, with a laugh that I thought was a bit forced.

'A fellow can't be too careful, though,' Wolfram Dick put in. 'I knew a man over in Australia who saw the Bunyip and he pegged out all right before the next sunrise. The sight of the Bunyip means death, you know.'

‘Well, we’ll take care not to swallow any insects to-day and then we will not see any ghost, Wolfram,’ I said, laughingly. ‘All the same, if the poison of the pests has nothing to do with our powers of eyesight I have half an idea that anything we *do* see will not like bullets through it.’

All agreed, and then we busied ourselves getting gold for the rest of the day. When the sun dropped behind the forest-clad slopes of the Owen Stanley Ranges and the mosquitoes and other insects of night took the place of native bees and other day pests, we were tired but well satisfied. We enjoyed a good supper round the blazing camp-fire and then, extinguishing it, lay on our blankets in the darkness and smoked and talked. The night was sultry and the insects were very active, and so as to escape—or, rather, forget—the unpleasant accompaniments of New Guinean night life each man went to sleep as soon as he could. And, as on the previous night and, doubtless, during the nights of past æons of time, the stars went through their usual evolutions and only the sounds of night-birds and reptiles were indications that the earth was still a world of living creatures.

But that night was not destined to run its normal course. We were roused by a yell which echoed and reverberated far down the river, and sitting up on our blankets we saw the flaming spectre of the night before standing in a gap in the river-flanking vegetation. The flames around the figure shot skywards in long curling waves and illuminated the gap in the great hedge as vividly as if a spot-light had been directed upon it.

‘I see the ghost,’ whispered Wolfram Dick. ‘Do you fellows see it?’

‘We do,’ snapped Mac, seizing his rifle, ‘and as we’ve swallowed no insects to-day the sight of it can’t be due to insect poison.’ He fired at the ‘thing’ as he spoke, and

almost at the same moment we all fired, Sydney Charlie and I using our new magazine pistols, thinking they could do as much damage as rifles at so short a range. But the 'thing' still stood there, seemingly not in any way affected by bullets, and we gaped at each other in utter amazement.

'It can't be mortal !' Mac gasped. 'I think I sent my shot right through its head. I—I'll see how it likes my fists.' He jumped to his feet and ran over the sand towards the flaming apparition, unheeding or not hearing our calls to him to come back.

'Don't shoot for a little, boys,' the Professor cried. 'You might hit Mac——'

'He'll not tackle that thing alone anyhow,' I cried, springing up and rushing after Mac. I was now half-mad with some emotion I did not understand, and I did not care whither my footsteps led me, but just as I gained Mac's side and as together we were about to plunge into the burning bush, the ghostly warrior faded away and the flames died out.

'It's no use trying to grapple with it, my boy,' Mac said despairingly, 'and now you fellows will remember me as a man who ran away from a ghost !'

'You never ran away from anything, Mac, whether you understood it or not,' I replied, 'and all us boys know that anyhow. All the same, it would be sure death to go into that bush after the ghost. Let's get back to the others.' I snapped my pistol and, finding that it was empty, flung it in disgust at the spot in which the ghost had been standing and walked back with Mac.

We raked our camp-fire into a blaze and watched around it until sunrise. Then we went over to survey the place which we had seen burning. But neither gap nor signs of burning were there ; the wall of foliage stretched unbrokenly as before up and down the river-bank as far as we

could see and the network of spider-webs lay over the outside of all as it always had done.

‘This place is uncanny, boys,’ the Professor remarked slowly. ‘I, for one, don’t like nightly visitors that we cannot shoot or reason with. After all, they were probably here first, so I vote that we leave the place to them.’

‘And there are too many insect pests here for our comfort,’ Wolfram Dick added. ‘I vote with the Professor.’

‘I vote that we stay where we are,’ said Mac quietly, but as no one felt inclined to second his motion, we packed up our gold and in a few minutes were stumbling down the shallow river, regardless of crocodiles and everything else, desiring only to put as much distance as possible between us and the camp we were leaving before sundown. A few days later we struck the nearest settlement of white men and told that we had passed down a river on the beach of which was more gold than could be taken away.

‘Oh, we all know of that place,’ an old miner laughed. ‘It is known to us as the haunted valley. Some men who thought they feared nothing on earth have gone there at one time or other, but they all came back in a hurry and told us they wouldn’t stay there for all the gold in New Guinea.’

We did not inform the men of that camp of our experience, and when we eventually arrived at Samari, the chief township on the coast, we divided our profits and broke up as a party. Big Sam and I came home to Britain, the Professor went over to New Zealand to write a book and the others went off to the most recent rush in Australia. Personally, I soon almost forgot my experiences on that sandy beach of gold, and I suppose this story should end here—but it doesn’t.

In time Big Sam and I became very tired of conditions in

the Old Country, and one cold day while we were sitting in the lounge of the London hotel at which we were staying, thinking of other parts of the world where the sun shone, a man approached us and said abruptly : ' I have a letter of introduction to one of you gentlemen, so I thought I might have a look at you before leaving England.'

' Well, you see us now,' Big Sam replied, as I glanced at the letter handed me and saw that it was from a partner in a firm of financiers with which we were acquainted. ' What do you think of us ? '

' Not much—still you don't look like financial men——'

' We're not,' said my companion, ' and we don't like that fraternity. All the same, that scar on your forehead doesn't add to your own appearance, but I'm not saying what I think of *you*——'

' Oh, I didn't mean to be offensive,' broke in the stranger. ' I thought you were financiers because that letter of introduction was given me by one of them. Your faces are not unpleasant to me. Quite the contrary. Still, if you are not financiers you'll not be interested in what I have to say——'

' Better spit out your story, anyhow,' Sam said, looking at the letter I handed to him ; ' this introduction is from a man who wouldn't send you to us unless he had half an idea that your yarn might be of some interest to us.'

' Oh, all right !' laughed the stranger, throwing himself down upon a chair at our little table, while I touched a bell. ' Your faces have been painted by warmer suns than ever shine in England, I notice ; so, as you have been wanderers also, you'll understand what I am up against, at least. Of course, I don't expect that you can be of any use to me, but, briefly : I have discovered a rich tract of gold which I can no longer work myself alone. I have come to London to

get financial help to instal machinery and otherwise develop the ground, but people here will not believe me when I say that I have hitherto held the place by frightening other men away——’

‘How did you manage to do that?’ I interrupted. ‘Gold-seekers are not easily frightened.’

‘They were in my case. They don’t like ghosts near them, or anything they don’t understand, so I acted the ghost when any men came too near——’

‘But surely they would see that they were being tricked?’ I said, exchanging glances with Big Sam.

‘No, they didn’t,’ continued the stranger with a laugh. ‘You see, the bush which lined the river—I mean, the gold tract—was composed of a lot of varieties of shrubs. One of those was the tree known as the “oil-plant” because it exudes a kind of oil from its leaves, and I had only to make up as a spectre, stand between a couple of those plants in a place previously prepared and apply a light to them to start a blaze which threw me into a sort of relief. I had two native companions; they were faithful all right and could yell, like what might a demon, when required to draw attention. I stayed in my hidden camp behind the foliage when any prospectors came along and appeared as a ghost only at night. I seldom needed to play the trick twice, for the visitors usually departed in a hurry after my first appearance. I felt, though, that my bluff might be called at any time by some prospector who was either too ignorant or too well educated to fear what might happen to him if he investigated more closely, so I came home to London to try to form a development Company. But it seems that my story was not sufficiently convincing to the financial people I interviewed——’

‘But surely some of the gold-seekers who saw you shot

at you ? ' I insinuated, bringing the narrator back to the part of his story which interested me.

' Sometimes they did ; but, you see, I knew they would be too scared of me to shoot when they saw me first, and after I had shown myself for a moment I always flung myself flat upon the ground, and the shots—if any—went over my head.'

· ' But prospectors wouldn't shoot at a thing not visible : '

' But I *was* visible, my friend ; at least, I appeared to be. The continuity of my form remained in their eyes for some time after I had made myself scarce. I really crept away, however, when the flames of the oil-plants died out completely. I did not linger any longer than I could help, I can tell you, and I owe this mark on my face to the fact that once I delayed too long in getting away. I was nearly caught that time by two men who actually rushed at me, but, as I had already vanished from sight, they couldn't—or thought they couldn't—catch a thing that had dissolved into darkness, and stopped just before they entered the still-smouldering bush. I expect they were half-mad, for one of them flung his empty magazine pistol at the place where I had been, in what must have been a fit of temper or unreasoning fear. In any case, he unconsciously acted better than he knew, for I was lying down a few yards from where he stood and his weapon fell on the side of my head and left this scar you see with me. I have kept the pistol ever since and often think I should like to meet the owner to see how he looked when I told him my story and gave him back this shooter.'

The stranger laughed reflectively as he produced the pistol about which he had been speaking and handed it to me for better inspection, and as I gazed at my own initials on its butt I thought that truth was indeed stranger than fiction.

But prospectors, as a rule, are good poker-players and I passed it to Big Sam without a word. He handled it nonchalantly for a moment, absolutely no expression on his tanned face betraying the fact that he had ever seen it before, and remarked, as he handed it back to the stranger : ' Those things are difficult to buy nowadays unless a fellow has a licence for fire-arms.'

' Your story may not be convincing to others,' I said, addressing the man in matter-of-fact tones, ' but somehow it goes down with us, and although we are not financiers of any kind *we'll* raise enough capital to develop that sand patch, among our friends. We'll cable to some of them now, and it is likely that they will join us in person somewhere on our way to New Guinea——'

' But I never expected you fellows to interest yourselves in my troubles, and—and—I don't remember ever saying to you that that sand patch was in New Guinea.'

' Did you not ? Then I must have dreamt that you did,' I said hurriedly, ' but I take it that we are to be partners henceforth, so, do you mind telling us why none of the men you scared away from that place ever tumbled to the fact that the flaming spectre was not all it seemed, when they saw the gap left in the wall of foliage, next day ? '

' Oh, they didn't see any gap made by the fire. The spiders were plentiful around that place and myriads of them wove webs over it almost as soon as the flames ceased. Those webs are very deceiving in nature, as leaves and even twigs are woven all through them, and therefore the outside of the river vegetation always looks the same unbroken mass by day.'

A SPOT OF LEAVE.

BY C. S. JARVIS.

THE Great War was remarkable for many things, not the least of which was the firm conviction held by every officer and man, that his comrades on the other fronts were having a far better war than he was. In France, with its incessant shelling, pouring rain, and waterlogged trenches, the soldier envied and in fact felt intensely hostile to his opposite number in Egypt, who, in his opinion, was having a 'cushy' time basking in the warm sunshine and being fanned to sleep by lovely houris. He was not quite clear in his mind what a *houri* was, but he imagined her to be an attractive 'bit of skirt' whose chief charm lay in the fact that this was the one article of attire she did not wear. The troops in Egypt, on the other hand, as they beat away the flies and mosquitoes and toiled through ankle-deep, red-hot sand, thought enviously of the 'lucky blokes' in France who managed to keep cool and got a spot of leave every three months. The only thing in the *houri* line they ever saw was a veiled Arab woman looking like a dusty bundle of black rags or, as one Dorset lad put it, 'a potato sack tied up rough,' and certain of those Continental ladies politely styled 'artistes' who had been resident in Cairo and Alexandria for some twenty or thirty years and who, unlike port, had not improved with keeping.

It was the question of leave that rankled most, for, though the troops in Sinai and Palestine got an odd day or so in Egypt at infrequent intervals, it was the home town and their own people that they desired to see and not the lurid

lights and rather sordid attractions of Cairo and Alexandria. As the War dragged on the feeling became so strong that the authorities began to think, and when the red-tabbed fraternity start theorising and putting a strain on their brains, all sorts of queer things happen. One result was that it suddenly occurred to the Staff that, if some two hundred thousand men were kept shut up in the East indefinitely, there would be a most lamentable falling-off in the birth-rate and no young entry coming along to take part in the final Armageddon that would inevitably follow the war to end wars. Something had to be done and done quickly, and so volunteers were called for to go home and see about it, and as a matter of course the whole Expeditionary Force stepped forward as one man for this forlorn hope. It then transpired that only married men were eligible for this particular fatigue, for mid-Victorian prudity has always been a keynote of the British Army, and bachelors who had volunteered were very nearly crimed with 'conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.'

This more or less was the state of affairs that ultimately led up to the order by which as a concession—a concession, mind you, for never at any time has the British Army admitted that an officer or a man has a right to leave or anything else—certain officers and men of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force might proceed to the United Kingdom for five weeks' leave, including the passage from and to Egypt. As a passage in normal times took anything up to fourteen days, the offer was not so generous as at first appeared, and another snag, in the case of officers, was that if Government transport were not available they would be compelled to provide their own passages back to Egypt. However, as the last thing a man thinks about is how he proposes to get back from leave, nobody worried much about this side of

the question at the time, though incidentally it provided a considerable amount of what is commonly called 'food for thought' later.

In due course notification was received at various Battalion Headquarters of those lucky officers and men who had been selected as worthy of obtaining this leave, and amid scenes of wild enthusiasm, punctuated by Rabelaisian laughter and unprintable remarks, the future fathers of the new Army set forth on their travels from various wayside stations on the Sinai Military Railway. There was only one regrettable incident to mar a happy day—an unthinking officer in a hurry for the train committed the worst military crime an officer could commit; he rode from his dug-out to the station in shorts, and as this amounted to a form of sacrilege against the Cavalry traditions, and was moreover a definite insult to that holy animal, the horse, there were most stringent orders against it. Unfortunately for him he met a Cavalry Brigadier on the way—if it had been an Infantry Brigadier the probability is it would not have mattered so much—and on learning that the disgracefully clad officer was hurrying to catch his train for leave home after two years' service, the incensed General very rightly cancelled his leave on the spot and sent him back to his regiment.

The first thing that the leave party had to do on arrival at Kantara station was to line up immediately in a queue outside the R.T.O.'s office, and in due course write their names in block capitals and answer a number of pertinent and impertinent questions about religion, how many inoculations they had received, and various other details that cannot have been of the slightest interest to the R.T.O. This was the first occasion on which this rather boring and very lengthy ceremony took place, and after this it happened with the greatest regularity at every station, dockside, quay, siding,

rest-camp, or other places within the meaning of the Act at which officers found themselves gathered together during the course of this long and very arduous journey. The habit became so strong that for years afterwards whenever officers of this particular leave party saw a queue outside a labour exchange, soup kitchen, or pit of a theatre, they automatically fell in at the end of the line and on arrival at their destination proceeded to write their names in block capitals on anything that happened to be handy, unless prevented by the police.

After many vicissitudes the leave party arrived at a Rest Camp at Alexandria, and here we came in touch for the first time with those aged Napoleons who acted as Base and Rest Camp Commandants on all fronts during the War ; and we met many during the next seventeen days. Exactly how the military authorities managed to collect all these elderly gentlemen and why they sent them, considering their natural restlessness, to command Rest Camps is known only to that special type of Whitehall brain that put a well-known Harley Street skin specialist, who had not seen a typhoid case for thirty years, in charge of an enteric hospital ; or, having discovered what particular languages a well-known linguist could speak, promptly despatched him to the one front on which he could use none of them.

These fiery old gentlemen, who for the last twenty years had been roaring 'Fore !' on the local golf-course and frightening the lives out of Rural District Councils, one and all thought they should be in command of Army Corps. Having been baulked in their ambition, they therefore tried to put some of 'The old Regiment's' spit and polish into the officers and men of the new Army or Territorials who were unlucky enough to drift into their camps for a short space of rest after the turmoil of the trenches or glaring heat

of the Palestine plains. The result was invariably unfortunate—the hardened troops took an instinctive and mutinous dislike to the old warrior in command, who in return cheerfully predicted our ultimate defeat in the War unless the men going down to bathe marched in a smart and soldier-like manner and wore caps with stiff brims and tops. They also took great exception to the new subaltern's moustache, and from behind their own thick hirsute fringe gave orders that all officers staying in camp should proceed to grow something of the soup-strainer variety, which was difficult, if not impossible, considering the time available and the age of the erring officers.

After a none-too-pleasant stay in Alexandria, largely occupied in arguments as to whether we should or should not attend the early morning parade of the camp, we finally embarked on a returning empty transport which, being in normal times a first-class Atlantic passenger ship, provided us with comfort and luxury to which we had been strangers for many long weary months. We looked forward to a pleasant rest in the atmosphere of a luxury liner, but had forgotten the submarine menace and the order about life-belts. This order concerning life-belts, which of course was quite necessary, was to the effect that no officer or man was to be without his life-belt for a moment once the ship had put to sea. No matter what one was doing, the life-belt had to be in one's hand, and it was only as a great concession that one was allowed to put it down whilst playing deck tennis. If one arrived in the saloon for dinner or the bar for a drink without this very necessary adjunct to continued existence in one's hand, an inexorable ship's officer would send one back to the cabin for it, and life became a belt-ridden burden.

Then there were those individuals on board who suffered

from what one might call a submarine complex and could think of nothing else. The majority of us preferred to forget that at any moment there might be an ear-splitting roar followed by a tilting deck and an involuntary plunge, and we should have been able to do it most successfully but for the presence of these gloomy individuals who would walk into the bar at the holy hour of 6 p.m. and say they had just seen something black bob up close to the ship. Or they took the form of rumour-mongers who obtained tips straight from the Captain's mouth that two ships had been blown up a few miles ahead, and we were altering our course in the hope of evading the submarine.

Actually we saw no submarines, but this did not deter the fearful ones from saying that they had. I dined one night in a Headquarter mess on my return to Palestine and heard the most thrilling story of two torpedoes that had just missed the ship by inches and a fight between the submarine and a British trawler and ourselves, ending in the complete disintegration of the German vessel by gun-fire, largely, I gathered, due to the story-teller's assistance with the transport's Hotchkiss gun. All this had occurred on the ship in which I went on leave, which only goes to confirm how unreliable the evidence of some eye-witnesses can be and how extremely unobservant other people are.

We did, however, pick up a boat from a torpedoed transport with several officers in it all bound for leave in the same way as ourselves. It had been quite a pleasant torpedoing as torpedoing goes and, with the exception of two or three men killed by the explosion, everybody had escaped in the boats and all the boats were picked up. An amusing episode in connection with this concerns a boat-load of officers who were saved by a tramp steamer and torpedoed for the second time just before they reached Marseilles ;

and, to make the story still more intriguing, four of the officers concerned on returning from their short leave were torpedoed for the third time off the island of Pantellaria. I should imagine that it was extremely unlikely that any of these officers were torpedoed for a fourth time, and I suspect they remained in Egypt on dry land till not only the War was over, and the submarines laid up, but also all risk of stray mines had been removed completely.

We also had a genuine scare and the Captain must have really received one of those reports of submarines ahead, as we suddenly changed course and anchored in Suda Bay in Crete, and here we spent two days of our precious and all-too-short leave. On the evening of the second day we hove up anchor amidst the cheers of the troops, and were about to proceed on our way when a fire giving off a big column of smoke was lighted on the mountain that overlooks the bay. It was so obviously a signal to some lurking submarine that amid groans and cat-calls the anchor was dropped again and we did not sail till the early hours of the morning.

When we arrived at Marseilles it was a most depressing vista of grey dirty buildings with a grey dirty rain falling on liquid mud, and the scenery was in no way improved by the presence of a large army of blue-tabbed R.T.O.'s, M.L.O.'s, camp commandants, and other Base parasites. They one and all seemed to think it a personal insult that anyone should go on leave and, having taken the trouble to ship us off to the Dardanelles and Egypt some two years previously, considered it lacking in both taste and gratitude that we should want to return. To get square they formed us into a series of queues and at the end of each we duly signed our names in block capitals, and by this means finally queued our way into a Marseilles siding. I was on the

point of writing 'station' when it occurred to me that at no time during the War did I ever—nor did any other officer—experience the honour of mounting a train at a station, Victoria, of course, excepted. One invariably climbed into trains at sidings, and extremely muddy ones at that, and if mud was not available the softest shifting sand was the invariable substitute.

I had had always a most profound respect for the P.L.M. line until I saw the train that our grateful French allies had provided in mid-winter for a swarm of thinly clad, thin-blooded officers and men returned from the East. Doors and windows were conspicuous by their absence, and the only way one could tell the difference between the classes was that the first-class compartments had pieces of biscuit box wood nailed roughly over the apertures and the third class had none. On seeing this train every officer was struck at once with an idea, a perfectly brilliant idea in every way and only marred by the fact that there was no originality about it, for we all came to the same conclusion at precisely the same moment, i.e. that in our own particular case there were the most urgent reasons why, instead of travelling in this ghastly wraith of what had once been a train, we should pay our own fare and travel by the ordinary night express. Therefore we turned back as one man and, forming a voluntary queue, explained in detail our various reasons for being granted this concession. The order concerning this was most definite and emphatic and was to the effect that no officer under the rank of full Colonel was to be granted the facility in any circumstances; but there are, always have been, and always will be, officers of the British Army who will overcome any order that has ever been issued, and whether it was managed by the hasty putting up of extra stars and crowns, or by the more simple and possibly

less deceitful method of claiming relationship with Allenby, Haig, or Plumer, the fact remains that some thirty 'got away with it' and thereby earned the undying hatred of those who failed. The result of this, however, was that we were not so crowded as we might have been and I found myself in a compartment with a Padre—to be exact, an Army Chaplain—and no one else. I was rather worried about this at first, as the journey had already been sufficiently trying to bring out all the worst in one's character and vocabulary, and I was afraid that further discomforts and disappointments might cause me to forget that I was in the presence of the Cloth. Luckily, however, this particular Chaplain belonged to that very broad-minded type that is not averse to using the word 'Damn' itself and is if anything rather grateful to a layman who will supply something more forcible on those occasions when this harmless little word is completely inadequate to deal with the situation.

By this time, although we had disembarked from the ship shortly after dawn, it was now two o'clock in the afternoon, and as the train was and had been for the last three hours scheduled to start 'at once,' it was most inadvisable to attempt to find a restaurant or shop where food could be purchased. We, therefore, put our valises on the seats and endeavoured to forget the sinking feeling in our stomachs by going to sleep. I awoke some hours later in the darkness to find the train stationary and peered out to discover if possible the name of the place, only to learn that we were still at Marseilles, but in another and, if possible, less attractive siding and still farther away from the town and shops. Eventually, however, we really got a move on amid loud cheers from the length of the train, and finally arrived at Avignon at about 8 p.m. in a state of hunger bordering on frenzy. The Padre and I at once jumped from our carriage—

there was little difficulty about this as the board acting as a doorway had already been shaken off—and rushed in the direction of the town. Every occupant of the train was imbued with the same idea, but there arose a voice of authority crying among the multitude, ‘Everybody back to their compartments—the train is just going to start.’

I may mention here that there was an O.C. train, a most important-looking full Colonel, who had as his assistant an Adjutant who was extremely large and noisy, and they were invariably responsible for this cry that arose at every stopping-place to the effect that the train was starting immediately. The same individuals had acted as O.C. ship and Adjutant respectively and had not impressed any of the party with either their acumen or efficiency. The Colonel, we learned, was returning to England with what was known in those days as a bowler hat, and this seemed remarkable, for outwardly he filled the bill—his moustache was of the correct old Regular pattern, his cap had both a hard top and brim, and his boots were beyond criticism, and we all wondered why such an imposing military figure had come unstuck. The Adjutant was of a type to which we were all accustomed; Shakespeare knew all about them in the sixteenth century when he wrote: ‘Drest in a little brief authority—like an angry ape, plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep.’ I do not know if he made the angels weep—he certainly caused the troops to swear.

These two individuals, who were invariably absent when most required, were always to the fore when we could have dispensed with their company. If we required any information as to our future—and once one had embarked on this God-forsaken train it seemed very doubtful if we had such a thing—the carriage of the O.C. and his satellite was either

empty or locked with the blinds down. If, on the other hand, we were dashing towards the nearest café or restaurant, they were well in the van of the advance, stemming the rush and ordering everyone back to his seat.

Avignon is, of course, a most wonderful old city and tourists flock there to see the ancient churches and Roman bridge, but it was not looking its best at 8 p.m. on a rainy January night, and, as nobody felt in the mood to spend several days there sight-seeing till the next leave train arrived, we went disconsolately back to our coaches. The train, however, did not start and the men, who were better off than we were as they had been issued rations and had, moreover, with that initiative for which British troops are famous, provided themselves with unlimited bottles of beer, started a sing-song. If they had been marching up to the trenches in Flanders through pouring rain to take part in an attack at dawn the songs would have been cheerful and enlivening, for nothing makes the British soldier so hilarious as the general hopelessness of things. As, however, they were comparatively comfortable in a railway train bound for England, Home, and Beauty, the *motif* was definitely mournful, and the song they sang was :

*' Don't go down the mine, Daddy,
Dreams very ofen come treew ;
I can't think what would become of me
If anythink 'appened ter yew.
Go tell your mates as they start fer work,
As shore as the stars do shine,
Somefink is going to 'appen ter-night,
So, Daddy, don't go down ther mine.'*

This dreary dirge wailing through the empty siding and

punctuated by despairing whistles from a locomotive that could not or would not move had a most depressing effect on an already depressed stomach.

Somehow about nine o'clock the train started and crawled eventually into Orange, and here the whole party of famished officers, orders or no orders, fought their way out of the station. There were several restaurants close by, and we dived into them, filling every table and demanding food, and lots of it, with the best wine the country could produce. In my particular restaurant roast goose was the dish of the evening and roast goose sounded good. There was a clatter of plates, the rapid popping of corks, and then, as we picked up our knives and forks, one of the leave party shoved his head in at the door and yelled frantically, 'Hurry up, the train is off.' Immediately there was pandemonium—officers with a bottle of wine and a leg of a goose in one hand and a couple of boiled potatoes in the other flung down a handful of the paper that used to pass for money in France and raced up the street. The train was gone, but we could see its tail lights disappearing in the distance, and after a sprint of some four hundred yards we ran it down and scrambled into our compartments. As a train it really seemed hardly worth catching, but it was, so far as we could see, the only possible link with England and as such could not be ignored.

This was the first of four days of nightmare, starvation, interminable waits, unfinished meals, and frantic races across railway metals, sidings, shunting points, signal wires, and all the intricate, rusty paraphernalia of the French railway system. There was no indication whatsoever as to where we were going to stop or for how long. We would arrive in a siding at 7 a.m. and would wonder if we were going to stay there sufficiently long to get a wash, shave, and

breakfast, or whether the train was merely going to stop for an odd five minutes. The Padre and I would argue the pros and cons of the case, study the expressions of the railwaymen, look at the weather, and occasionally go so far as to ask the opinion of that Great Man, the O.C. train. This rather savoured of putting a direct question to the Almighty, and in any case the result was much the same ; the look of awesome blank dignity with which we were greeted suggested the godhead, and the terrible silence that followed the look made one think of the religious calm in empty cathedrals or the deathly quiet around the peak of the Mountain of the Law in Sinai.

We chased the train at night clad in thick overcoats, carrying long French loaves and bottles of wine ; we chased it in the early dawn half-naked and half-shaved, clutching sponges, razor, and hair-brushes to our breasts ; and we sat in our compartments for two hours wondering if we could attempt a meal, despite the fact that we had never succeeded in doing so yet ; and the moment we had definitely made up our minds to chance it and were two hundred yards up the street the whistle would blow, and once again, unfed and furious, we would stumble cursing over the sleepers in its wake.

As days went on we lost member after member of that leave party—a wonderful dish of *poulet aux casserole avec champignons* one night proved more attractive for ten absent-minded beggars than the welcoming arms of wives—and whether they ever reached England and those they loved at home is shrouded in mystery ; for all I know they may still be stumbling after shadowy trains in French sidings on the P.L.M. line. The R.T.O.'s and D.A.D.R.T.'s to whom we went in our misery were coldly adamant ; if we lost that train no power on earth could put us on an ordinary express,

and we should have to wait days or weeks for another troop train.

The Padre and I played piquet and took to drink. We found that copious draughts of French *bière* on an empty stomach too cold and unsatisfying in a chilly open compartment in winter, *vin ordinaire* was like the *bière*, only more so, and various higher-priced bottles of Bordeaux or claret proved to be only *vin ordinaire* of the most ordinary and acid variety—so we took to brandy. We found that tots of *Cognac* rendered down with *vin ordinaire* and taken eight times a day caused one to forget that one was unshaven, unwashed, and had had no solid food for eighteen hours. Piquet also helped to while away the interminable hours, and our stakes became higher and higher. At times the Padre had won everything I possessed in the world, including property I had not yet inherited, and a few hours later I owned him, his surplices, and his future vicarage, wherever that might be. Luckily it was an entirely paper transaction, and as the Padre lost the valuable account in the scramble getting on to the boat at Dieppe on the last day, it was impossible to decide whether I owed him £2,000 or he was indebted to me to the tune of fifteen francs ten centimes.

On the morning of the fourth day the train stopped at 7.30 a.m., and forty travel-worn, despairing officers made a rush up the siding towards a most attractive estaminet that was giving off a strong perfume of coffee and rolls. They were led by a tall and savage-looking subaltern of Indian Cavalry, and had almost reached the end of the train when the door of the holy reserved compartment opened and the O.C. in all his majesty stepped out.

‘Where are you going?’ he demanded.

‘To get some breakfast,’ said the subaltern savagely.

‘You say “sir” when you speak to me, sir,’ snapped the

O.C. 'Get back to your coach—you can't get breakfast here.'

'Why not, *Sir*?' roared the subaltern, and a hungry mutinous chorus behind shouted, 'Yes, *Sir*—why not?'

'Because,' replied the Colonel, 'the train is only staying here five minutes.'

'How do you know how long this dam' train is going to stop or where it is going, or anything else about it? Nobody knows, nobody has ever known, and nobody ever will know,' yelled the subaltern.

'Don't speak to me like that,' roared the O.C. 'I know, and it is my place to know. Look at this,' and he pulled a typewritten sheet from his pocket. 'Beauvais: the train will stop for ten minutes. Neufchâtel: the train will stay for two hours. Breakfast for officers at the estaminet *Coq d'Or*.'

The subaltern took the paper from him and we all peered over his shoulder, and written clearly in the orderly room clerk's best typing were all the details of our terrible four days' wanderings and interminable stops. It began with Avignon and Orange, and in the 'Remarks' column were details of the restaurants and cafés at which meals were specially provided for the hungry officers, and which accounted for the vast supplies of food we sometimes found by chance but never had time to eat.

'And do you mean to say, *Sir*,' said the subaltern, in a dangerously quiet voice, 'that you have been in possession of this document the whole of the journey and that you never disclosed its contents to the officers concerned?'

'Certainly,' replied the O.C. 'This is a confidential document and its contents might be of value to the enemy. I have had it with me since we started.'

'Then you're a bloody old fool, *Sir*,' roared the subaltern.

‘How dare you ! I put you under arrest. I cancel your leave. Here you, Major Smith, put this officer under arrest and hand him over at Dieppe to the proper authorities.’

‘I’m sorry, sir,’ said the Major appealed to, ‘but I think this officer is quite correct in his statement. If, as you say, you have been in possession of this document from the start of this hideous journey and kept the contents entirely to yourself, then I must subscribe to his opinion and say that without doubt you are a bloody old fool, and I am sure all the other officers concerned will agree with me most heartily.’

With this there was such a roar of hearty approval that the O.C. hurriedly scrambled back into his coach and the door remained locked till we crawled slowly into the docks of Dieppe. There was no longer any doubt in our minds as to the reason why this glorious soldier had come unstuck.

FORECAST.

*The young of to-day have decided
 That poetry is not poetry;
 Away with loveliness,
 Away with music.
 Let the lines roar like a traffic jam,
 Stutter like a machine gun,
 Let them be monotonous as ribbon development,
 Stark as pylons,
 Obscure as police traps,
 Garish as petrol pumps.*

*Well, then, so be it:
 The poetry of beauty is out of fashion.*

*Yet, because of a number of obstinate survivals—
 Because dawn and sunset refuse to date,
 Because birds and trees,
 Waters and winds,
 Moon and stars
 Remain persistently in the mode,
 Above all because love stubbornly declines
 To be a back number—
 Owing to all this excess baggage
 From the contemptible past,
 Poetry, it may be surmised,
 Still has a chance to come back to the world,
 Drawing all eyes from the pylons and petrol pumps,
 All ears from the traffic jam and the machine guns,
 To some new silver rhythm of her wings
 In the eternal blue.*

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

SCARLET WOMAN.

BY L. STEWART BOYD.

IN his home beside the high Loch of the Eagles Phadruig the shepherd sat alone and looked at his great hands spread on the table before him. He was waiting for the next inevitable relative to come. If the next comer was a man he would rise up the first time the man spoke of Bride and he would take hold of the man with his hands and drag him out and drop him into the Loch of the Eagles.

Since early morning, when the villagers got to know that Bride had left him for some wandering gipsy man of her own kin, Phadruig's respectable relatives had been dropping in one by one ; partly they came to shake their heads and click their tongues over the shameless woman ; but mostly they came to sigh deliciously over the fulfilment, bitter and uttermost, of their own forebodings. They had all said months ago that no good could come out of a marriage between a decent shepherd and a gipsy woman of McPhee blood.

Now that they were right and had proved themselves right and rubbed their rightness well in like salt rubbed into a wound, Phadruig was sick of hearing them say ' I told you so.'

So, thought Phadruig, the next one who came would go into the loch. But if it happened to be a woman ? At that an inarticulate animal sound of frustration quivered in his throat. He hoped it would be a man. He wanted to fight somebody.

Not yet, for he was slow at thinking and Bride was not

long gone, had a clear understanding percolated into his mind. Trying to grasp the significant elements behind Bride's flight, he took facts, those facts he knew, and putting them together, sought to make masculine sense with them.

He had loved Bride, that was the truth : had loved her—though naturally not now. They had lived together in decent wedlock and she was happy, or at least seemed so : enough so to be laughing and singing and dancing in those months with more abandon than had ever seemed to him proper in a married woman.

Then suddenly she went away ; not regretfully nor in anger : not in secret either, but openly, riding joyously through the village street in a gipsy cart with her head on the shoulder of the gipsy man who was her new choice.

In bovine patience Phadruig marshalled his facts, but when he put them together they would not make sense : because he was marshalling them around Bride and she, being a woman, was beyond reason and incompatible with simpler masculine facts. So baffled, Phadruig's patience smouldered slowly into anger. And angry he was dangerous, as a goaded bull would be dangerous.

Outside, the latch clicked. The slight sound levered him to his feet with his hands empty and hungry, but when the door opened on the newcomer he did nothing worse than scowl ; for it was the minister, and the sanctity of his calling raised him high above the hazards run by ordinary men.

Phadruig had a great respect for the minister. He went to the kirk every Sabbath, all his kin went to the kirk, and they sat under the minister listening sombrely to his thundered denunciation of sin, and more sombrely to his vivid, terrible word-pictures of damnation and the eternal fires of hell. Tall, lean and ascetic, the minister had the look of one who walked a strait way, having the hiss of those eternal fires

always torturing his ears and the hope to escape from them ever in his thoughts.

The people of the village, from walking in the minister's wake, keeping dourly to his strait way, had caught his look and wore it habitually in their faces. Phadruig too ; but he was young and he had loved Bride. That made him a little different as yet. Uneasily he eyed the minister.

'The woman is gone,' he said, to break the silence.

'Aye. Aye. Sorry I am for you, Phadruig. Yet you'll remember,' the minister told him, 'that I bade you think well at the time.'

'And I did that.'

'But did you seek for guidance in the matter ? Tell me that.'

'I—I loved her.'

'Ah,' said the minister. 'Ah. Phadruig, the twig was bent and so was the tree inclined. And now you must put her out of your heart, Phadruig.'

'I will that,' Phadruig muttered.

The minister talked on. Dry and crackling like fir-cones underfoot, his voice filled the silence in place of Bride's singing : the grim uprightness of his black figure effaced with dour reality the shadow of Bride, the ghost of her moon-pale face and the blue-black marvel of her hair. Until he came the presence of Bride seemed to linger in the smoky kitchen. But nothing evil could stay in the same room as the minister. Listening to the thin crackling voice, Phadruig could feel the last faint scent and sound of the shameless woman flee as though from judgment and the terror of the eternal fire.

When the minister went away, the kitchen was very quiet and lifeless.

Phadruig sat alone. For all his talk, the minister had done

nothing, except exorcise the ghost of Bride, and he did not know he had done that, for Phadruig was not capable of telling him. For the rest, he had only said 'I told you so,' just as the villagers had said, only in grander, more awful words, with the heavy weight of the kirk behind them. They were all talkers. Phadruig, on the other hand, had never much use for them.

As the slow twilight came, he left the house. Long shadows were sliding across the hills; they filled the glens between with dusk thin as transparent blue veils. Under the first wind of night the heather shivered and the little Loch of the Eagles darkened slowly into blackness.

Away below in the valley lamps were glimmering in cottage windows. Phadruig went down to the houses and lifted his voice in the village street at the doors of his kinsfolk.

'Where have the McPhees gone?'

Men and women came to their lamplit thresholds. They eyed him fearfully, yet with a certain dark pleasure.

'Mercy upon us,' they murmured, 'he is going after the woman.'

And 'Will somebody not stop him?' they murmured. 'He will kill her, so he will. And then he will get himself hanged.'

'A man should not be hanged for a woman like yon.'

'Ah, that's a true word. But maybe they would hang him, all the same.'

They gathered round Phadruig, all talking softly at once, lamenting and trying to dissuade, yet at the same time pointing out to him with explicit care the direction taken by the wandering band of McPhees and Bride.

He shook them off and went ahead. The moon came up. Round and pale, it swam above the hills and silvered the heather of the moors which he crossed in a straight avenging

line. At the far end of the moors where a road cut the tangled undergrowth with a black smear of rutted mud, he came upon the gipsy tents.

They were crude things of sacking slung on sticks, huddled in the lee of the moors and silent except for the snarling of lean dogs scenting a stranger. The gipsies were quiet : asleep maybe : or maybe out and about on their nocturnal business of lifting salmon from the river and birds from the moors. And somewhere among the huddle of tents Bride was sheltering with her lover. So little she had thought of her slow-witted husband that she had halted but a few miles from the Loch of the Eagles : shameless, believing that she was safe.

Standing in the road, Phadruig hurled a stone in upon the tents and waited : a second he had to wait, or less, for the harvest of the stone. Up rose a loosed clamour of voices, a yelping of dogs, and above it all the sudden sharp yell that sounded as though his stone had drawn blood.

Then into the moonlight the man who had felt the missile most came bounding. Phadruig glowered at him.

‘I want,’ said Phadruig softly, ‘the woman, Bride.’

‘And what,’ the gipsy considered him with black mocking eyes, ‘would you be wanting with her?’

‘Why, I think I will kill her,’ Phadruig told him softly.

‘Ah.’ The gipsy stepped back and rubbed sleep from his eyes. This was not a drunk man, nor a country clod out for a stupid frolic, but a man in the kind of rage that is the most dangerous of all the ways of being angry, the soft-spoken, quiet way. He dropped his voice to a reasoning murmur. ‘Go home, man. We have no woman called Bride among us. Women of all names, but none we have called Bride, and that is no lie.’

Phadruig said nothing to that, but leaped, and yelling again,

the gipsy struck the heather. At the sound of his downfall, like reluctant figures released by a string, others came running. The crude tents spewed gipsies, men, women, children and dogs, cursing, crying, barking, all making their own several noises : and so breaking upon a peaceful night, began Phadruig's memorable battle with the McPhees.

Nowadays this story is a legend in the country-side, one of many legends treasured and remembered by the tale-tellers ; but there are two versions of Phadruig's part in the affair : one told by Phadruig's kinsmen and one as the McPhees themselves tell it. Strangely enough, the gipsies' version is kinder to Phadruig ; and since they were there they should know the truth better than anyone else.

As they tell it, they believed at first they had a madman to deal with, for certainly Phadruig did nothing to disillusion them. Knowing nothing about the cause of the uproar, they leaped up from their tents and met two fists which crashed impartially into their faces.

The easiest way to make a man angry is to give him a legitimate grievance. Phadruig's blows made grievance enough. Asking no more questions, the McPhees surged round him, sailing in with their fists : and Phadruig began to lay them out right and left.

He fought with a single-minded purpose. He wanted to get at the tents. He was going to tear them up one by one until he uncovered Bride and got at her with his hands. That was all or nearly all he wanted. To him the gipsies were but yelling obstacles in his way.

But they were many. They surrounded him, raining blows on his face and body, and he could not shake them off or break through their numbers. One went down before him ; another dropped ; but more swarmed up as he stepped over the fallen.

Stolidly, head down, he bore them back, though he could not break through them. Back the swaying group staggered towards the tents : and as they eddied on, men and lank-haired spitting viragoes of women alike reeled away from his flailing fists and their ardour slackened.

The clamour increased. Women's voices rose shrilling curses on the madman ; dogs bayed ; and children danced and wailed round the edges of the conflict. And Phadruig, ploughing a way towards the huddled tents, raised his bull voice in a bellow for Bride.

The tangle of shouting men stumbled back and forth on the heather. They were fighting well, the McPhees, but man for man there was no match in the country-side for Phadruig, and they were beginning to know it. With two men lying in the road, they swarmed back and raised their soft secret call to bring up the rest of the band from riverside and moor.

The plaintive call, fluted from battered lips, brought others running. They joined the eddying fight and their fists flailed at Phadruig and were in their turn knocked aside. But then one came running up with a cudgel and he ended the fight.

He swung the cudgel, bringing it skilfully down on Phadruig's head once : and Phadruig dropped mildly to the road.

' Ochone, Ochone,' the women keened, and crept away in the sudden silence that followed. The wrecked McPhees stood over him a moment, breathing heavily and holding the cudgel in readiness to use again ; but it was not needed. Phadruig slept peacefully in the mud, with three McPhees sleeping beside him.

When he awoke he was alone on the moonlit road. The gipsies had lifted their tents and with Bride safe among them

had moved on in the night, slipping away and leaving no trace behind except a few trampled places in the mud.

Phadruig took his aching head back to the Loch of the Eagles. He was shamed, and now twice shamed since the McPhees had thrashed him and left him lying in the mire. And Bride had sat in her tent all the time, watching the fight perhaps, safe, exulting in his downfall, and not caring for his humiliation.

Before that he was only angry with her. But now he hated her.

As if nothing had happened, he went back to his sheep. In the village he did not speak of the night's affair and no one asked him questions ; yet in the mysterious manner in which news travels and spreads across the lonely places, the tale of Phadruig's beating was soon known.

His dour kinsmen sat by their peat fires in the evening and shook their heads till their beards waggled ; and the women talked. The general opinion was that in this matter Providence was moving in a way more mysterious even than usual. Almost it seemed there was a flaw in the working out of Fate. The woman was as scarlet as a woman could be. And Phadruig was a decent lad. With all due respect to Providence, it was scarcely right that she should have ridden away, the scarlet woman, while Phadruig was laid and left prone in the dust.

One or two of the bolder sort even had a word with the minister about it, but flicking the pages of his Bible, he picked out like a conjurer swift phrases of comfort to which he pointed with an iron finger.

‘The Lord is not mocked,’ he said.

And ‘The mills of God grind slowly,’ he said.

It was all written down, as those who could read and had their spectacles with them could see ; so they were satisfied ;

the worm that dieth not had not gone permanently out of business.

The tag end of autumn began to merge into winter. The first snow fell on the hills and Phadruig's sheep came down from the high pastures ; but Phadruig himself stayed nearly all the time alone up on the hillside beside the Loch of the Eagles.

Winter came, sleet, high winds and bitter cold. Grey blankets of cloud hung always over the hills, mists always over the valleys, and sometimes the clouds loosed a driving sleet, sometimes snow that drifted and whirled over the dead sticks of heather. Snow and sleet and perpetual mist enveloped Phadruig's house beside the loch, and more than ever it became a lonely place for a solitary man to live in.

Yet he stayed there by choice and shunned the village. Withdrawn into himself, he was learning dangerously to brood.

He brooded upon the shame Bride had put on him ; and on the shame the gipsies had put on him, though, as they tell it, it was no shame ; and then he thought about the blackness of Bride's hair and the whiteness of her skin that was as near as a woman's skin could get to the soft whiteness of wild-rose petals flowering in early summer.

There were many other things to remember about Bride : the softness of her voice, like quiet water flowing, her dancing step, and the way she laughed, always laughed, even when a sensible woman would not be finding anything much to laugh over. Ochone, she had even smiled behind the minister's back, but that only once and when she was not long wed. He admitted that, fairly and honestly.

Then always he went back to the beating the gipsies gave him and ruminated darkly on that, until his massive hands would twitch hungrily for another try at the grinning

McPhees and a thin red mist would come blurring his eyes.

More and more, as the days drew in, the people of the village missed Phadruig : for in the winter they had their ceilidhs to while away the long evenings, and when they gathered to talk and tell stories and dance they needed him to make pipe music for their dancing. But he would not join them in the village. More and more he stayed alone beside the windy Loch of the Eagles and thought about Bride and the McPhees.

So since there was no other piper but Phadruig, the dancers had to fall back on the Port a' Beul, the mouth music monotonously chanted by their elders who sat and crooned in the ingle corners, clapping their hands to the beat of the dance. But that was not nearly the same. Nor was the fiddling of Bald John much good either ; because he drank a dram for every tune he played and, as some strange infirmity of body kept him from carrying his drink like a man, more often than not he was lying prone and peaceful in a corner when they wanted him most.

Yet they did not blame Phadruig overmuch for secluding himself. A man had his pride and shamed pride is a terrible thing for hurting. They clicked their tongues pityingly over Phadruig in his absence. And they did not forget the woman Bride. With a dour rock-like faith they waited to hear that the mills of God had got hold on her.

It was mid-winter, a bitter time of snow, when they heard. The woman who carried the news was given the tribute of instant silence even from the greybeards, and Bald John, not yet under the table, held his fiddle mute.

The gipsies had deserted Bride. She had been ailing perhaps and found the life too hard for her ; or maybe she had grown too soft and fine for the gipsy tents ; but whatever

the reason, and it did not matter much, they had moved on and left her by the roadside.

‘The man left her then?’ asked the eldest of the elders.

‘She said—to the son of my husband’s brother she said it—that there was no man. She said she just went off with her own kin, being tired of Phadruig and us.’

‘Ah,’ said the eldest of the elders with meaning, and spat into the fire.

But there was more. It was in the farthest glen beyond the mountains that the McPhees abandoned Bride : and what had she done after that? The people of the village, especially the women, shook their heads vigorously. They had no way of knowing what a scarlet woman would do in these or any other circumstances.

‘Ah well,’ said the woman, ‘what did she do then but walk into the town and take service in a house. Take the head from my body if I’m lying to you. This also the son of my husband’s brother told me, him having seen her.’

‘Is it,’ one asked darkly, ‘a respectable house?’

‘Well now——’

‘Tell us,’ they enjoined her strictly.

‘Ah, I did hear ’tis Catholics they are in the house——’

The elders sighed all together, a windy sigh, and Bald John, his time come, slid gently under the table. Above him as he snored a hot argument raged. Should Phadruig be told, they asked themselves. Some said no, some yes, but the woman who had brought the news ended all the talking by going out and seeking Phadruig to tell him herself.

He listened to her news in silence, to all of it except Bride’s extraordinary statement that she had not gone with a lover : for the woman did not think that worth telling. She was a firm believer in tradition, and tradition had it that there was

always a lover skulking somewhere about when a woman broke wedlock. To her Phadruig said nothing. As she ended he moved about the room making ready for a journey, always keeping his mood of dour silence.

The woman watched him a moment.

‘Are you for going to the town, Phadruig?’ she wailed suddenly.

He scowled at her. ‘Aye.’

‘Ah, don’t you go, boy. Don’t you go. Sure, the shame she put upon you is past now, and if you take the law into your hands they will hang you for it, so they will.’ She wrung her hands and ran about the kitchen, the flurry of her petticoats getting into his way. He pushed her aside and went out; but she ran after him.

‘Mercy upon us,’ she moaned, seeing him stride past the Loch of the Eagles. ‘He will kill her, sure as sure. I know it by the look on his face. Ah now, isn’t it terrible the way he is taken. Oh dear, oh dear——’

She cupped her hands to her mouth and wailed the address at him again just to make sure. But Phadruig had heard her the first time. He did not hesitate or look round from his swift purposeful stride towards the south.

All night Phadruig walked, and there was no moon to lighten the sighing darkness of the forests or smooth the humped backs of the moors in his way. Black clouds veiled the sky, pressing down upon the world until the darkness seemed a living thing, evilly intent on entangling his feet and hindering his purpose. Yet nothing could hinder him. He walked blindly like Fate, his great hands hanging loosely by his sides, and something like instinct brought him to the town.

In the early morning he strode in among the houses where a Sabbath quiet brooded. He had forgotten it would be the

Sabbath. The kirk bells reminded him. Hoarsely they were tolling the people to the kirk, and in douce answer to the austere summons the people were stealing in twos and threes out of the grey houses into the grey street where only the wind was gay and frolicked.

The kirk folk gave curious glances to Phadruig as they passed him. They did not like his looks. The roughness of his clothes and the unslept wildness of his face offended in that place and time when a man should either be walking soberly in his Sabbath blacks or staying indoors behind curtained windows until the service had begun.

But because he was looking at the names of all the houses he did not see or feel the reproach in people's eyes. And presently they had all passed on and into the kirk, so that he was left alone in the grey street.

When he found the house he sought he went up to the door and lifted his hand to knock. But his hand fell again to his side before he touched the door ; for within Bride was singing. He could hear her singing, and anywhere in the world he would have known it was she only by her voice. There was always a lift and a break in it when she sang as if she was always between laughter and tears. No one else in the village sang like that : only Bride.

He laid his head against the door a moment. That was necessary, for suddenly sorrow had come upon him and a strange weakness that made him want to stay there doing nothing, just glad to be listening to the voice of Bride after a winter of silence. But he did not wait long, for he knew well enough he was not glad to hear it again ; except that it had served to lead him to the shameless woman.

When the mood of weakness slipped away from him, he pushed the door open and entered.

‘ Bride,’ he said.

She was sitting alone in a shining kitchen grander than any he had ever seen : and she was smiling. The smile faded from her mouth at the sight of him ; but not altogether. It lingered faintly, an elusive shadow of mirth around the uncertain dimples of her cheeks.

‘ Ah, Phadruig, why have you come ? ’ she said.

Close he went up to her in dour silence. She stood to meet him. Standing thus, her head of night-black hair reached only to his breast. She was a little thing, slender as a wind-swayed willow. And always the shadow of a smile lingered about the curves of her mouth.

‘ The people of the house are all out,’ she said. ‘ They are away at the Mass.’

‘ The Mass ? ’

With an instinctive shrinking inbred from the dour generations behind him, Phadruig glanced around the kitchen ; as if he expected something he knew not what, but something menacing to the safety of his soul, to be lurking in the shining splendour of the grand kitchen furniture.

‘ ’Tis Catholic they are but very kind to me,’ said Bride.

Phadruig glowered at her. ‘ And you—are you for going to the Mass too ? ’

‘ Not yet,’ she teased him.

Not yet ; so he was in time to save her from that at least. Quietly he put out his massive hands and took her by the throat. His fingers quivered upon the softness of her flesh like living bands of steel ; slowly they quivered and tightened. As if from a far distance he heard her cry once. Once, that was all. She was going to die easily. He wanted her to die that way, easily and swiftly ; for he could not forget that he had loved her terribly, and though she had sinned and was a scarlet woman he hoped the Lord would be pitiful toward her when she was dead.

But how could that be ? For there was the awfulness of judgment and the terror of the eternal fires waiting for her as sure as sure. . In a minute they would get hold of her and she would be lost ; for ever lost.

He could not bear the thought of that. It twisted round in his heart, hurting him with an intolerable sorrow, and he knew all at once that he could never let her go to the fires, that he would rather lose his own hold on salvation than ever let her go to the fires. His fingers relaxed from their grip on her throat. Gently he lowered her into one of the fine wicker chairs.

‘ Oh, Bride,’ he said, ‘ I should be killing you. And it is not in me to do it.’

She put her hands to her bruised throat and gasped back her breath, staring at him always with a look of wondering pathos in her black eyes.

‘ Bride,’ he said, ‘ hark ye, I will send you money. I will give you all I have, Bride, and you shall go where you will. I’ll not hinder you. Only tell me you will not be a loose woman any more ; that you will be sorry for being a harlot——’

He was speaking slowly, for his thoughts were slow and always he had difficulty in clothing his thoughts with words. In the silences between his speaking Bride found her strength again. She stood up on her feet.

‘ Harlot ? ’ she said, and the black McPhee blood raged suddenly in her. Sobbing tearlessly with fury she flung herself at him and beat her fists against his face ; scratched his face with her nails and, grasping his hair with her two hands, tugged and pulled till he grimaced with pain. But he did not move to protect himself from her fury.

‘ Ah, Phadruig, you great puddock,’ she cried, ‘ is it that you can see nothing in the world but sin and righteousness ?

Is it a loose woman you would make of me only because I wearied of you, wearied sorely for the open roads and went back to my father and my brothers ? ’

Phadruig stared at her. ‘ They told me you went with a lover. ’

‘ I hate you, Phadruig. Not until this moment have I hated you, ’ she said, and turned a scornful shoulder to him. ‘ I was thinking you followed me and sought to kill me because you loved me and would not lose me. But you were only thinking on your pride and your righteousness. Never let me see you again, Phadruig. ’

Stolidly Phadruig mopped his scratched face and moved to take her arm. When he turned her towards the light he could see that she was weeping, for there were tears in her eyes and yet she was almost smiling too. He did not know what her mood was now. That was always the way with her. She was changeful like the wind in April and he would never be able to understand her at all.

‘ Bride, ’ he said, ‘ when are the people of the house coming back from the Mass ? ’

‘ Soon. You must go now, Phadruig. ’

‘ Aye, ’ he nodded. ‘ Then we’ll be going this minute. ’

‘ We ? ’

‘ Aye. ’

Bride laughed suddenly in the old way Phadruig remembered. She cast off her apron and took his arm ; and they crept almost furtively out of the fine kitchen, out of the house and away from the grey street of the town while the citizens in their Sabbath blacks were still shut in the kirk at prayer.

The Sabbath was a day of bitter cold. Racked by an icy wind the glens darkened into an early twilight, and as they plodded home from the last service at the kirk men and

women huddled themselves deeper into their wrappings. In the air was a promise of snow, much snow.

Slowly from the south a little cart drawn by an aged horse wavered up the track. It was not a village horse or a village cart. The alien aspect of the other-village outfit brought the gossips to their doors ; then others came quietly to stand and peer through the grey twilight ; the homing kirk folk paused and straightened their backs to stare. Mouths opened and stayed open, issuing no sound, not even a sigh of surprise.

Phadruig was riding back to the Loch of the Eagles. Stolidly he sat reining the aged horse loosely with his massive hands. Neither left nor right he looked, but rode on like a man in a fine dream ; and Bride was riding beside him, her head on his shoulder, shamelessly on his shoulder.

The rickety cart turned out from the village, up the hill track towards the high loch. Silence deep and terrible held the people of the village until the cart was high on the hill. Then from the street a sudden sharp gust of laughter rose ; as if all the people, all Phadruig's kinsmen, laughed bitterly at once.

High the wind lifted the stinging sound, carrying its mockery in gusty shreds, and flung it in Phadruig's face and Bride's face ; but because they were deep in talk they did not hear that ghost of a sound.

'Never will I weary for my brothers and my father again,' Bride was saying. 'They are but poor things. Ashamed of them and proud of you I was that night you fought them.'

'Ah,' said Phadruig, feeling the balm of the words on his pride.

'I will be a douce wife,' Bride went on. 'I'll not sing or dance or laugh too much any more——'

'Indeed,' said Phadruig dourly, 'I would rather you stayed as you are.'

BY THE WAY.

THE newspaper habit has become so ingrained in most of us that it is perhaps a little premature to wonder at its permanence ; but the next generation may, for all we know, regard the daily Press as it at present exists as an anachronism. More and more we listen in ; many who are not wireless addicts in general turn on their sets regularly each evening to hear the news : there is never time in the morning to do more than glance at the principal columns of one's newspaper, with probably a skimming of a leading article and a letter or two. I did once hear a man say that he read *The Times* right through from beginning to end every weekday of his life—but he was an untruthful Civil Servant. At all events, the world in general gets along very complacently without such industry ; and it is instructive to note the new devices by which many a newspaper now seeks to capture the attention of this exceedingly restless generation. Amongst the favourite devices is the custom of displaying very prominently the most ephemeral incidents : over and over again of recent years we have all had our eyes momentarily caught by a series of great headlines, followed by columns and even pages of a startling nature—this usually in the evening ; in the morning, their interest evaporated, it is exceptional to find the items that have been so starred without considerable search—they have almost invariably sunk to obscurity in at most a tucked-away paragraph or two. We have reached a stage when something 'sensational' must happen daily : and that is asking too much even of 1937.

More or less unanimously the rulers of the world of books announced that literature was going quietly to sleep for a month or so before and after the Coronation, on the ground that people would all be sightseeing, not reading, throughout May or June. There is not, however, much sign of book shortage. Last year seventeen new novels appeared on an average every week-day of the year. We know where most of the paper goes to : the puzzle is, where does it come from?

* * *

The thoughts of all in the British Isles and Dominions and of millions throughout the world have been joyfully concentrated this May upon our gracious King and Queen ; but many and many a thought must have gone also in sadness to the King who was never crowned. Hector Bolitho, beginning his notable Biography long ago in happier circumstances, has had a difficult task to achieve, and it may be said at once that he has overcome the difficulties with dignity and truth. *Edward VIII : his Life and Reign* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d. n.) is not happy reading : it could not be that ; but it is a biography of absorbing interest. That the Prince of Wales was overworked and overtravelled and in consequence rendered through no fault of his own restless and without enduring friendships or interests is the theme of the book which traces the Ambassador of Empire, the Prince of Salesmen, and the other titles heaped continuously upon the heir to the throne—through the years of his brilliant and unsparing travels and achievements and promises, through what Mr. Bolitho calls ‘the long, exacting apprenticeship, the long wandering through experience and doubt and melancholy, the frustration and the striving,’ through the months of his little reign to the melancholy tragedy of December last. It is inevitably a story of almost unparalleled poignancy and Mr. Bolitho, for all his sympathy and restraint,

spares us none of it : he has written a book that will be read and weighed and debated for many a year to come.

* * *

No family that the world has ever produced has exercised such a lasting attraction for succeeding generations as the strange, turbulent, unscrupulous, art-loving, ambitious Medici : they can be, and have been, studied from many angles and all are fruitful. Their latest historian, Mrs. Hicks-Beach, has adopted in the book she calls *A Cardinal of the Medici* (Cambridge University Press, 15s. n.)—though it should really have been called ‘A Mother of a Cardinal of the Medici’—a method as unusual as it is full of possibilities. Ippolito de’ Medici, the son of Giuliano and grandson of Lorenzo Il Magnifico, had an unknown mother : that mother Mrs. Hicks-Beach brings to life. She has written this book as the imagined autobiography of this mother ; and, as such, it is a notable achievement. All the famous people of that brilliant, unstable period of Italian history walk through and talk in its pages : though Mrs. Hicks-Beach disclaims erudition, she has steeped herself quite abnormally in her subject, so much so that to any but those to whom the personages are already familiar names may be a little bewildered. In 384 large and closely printed pages (so closely that they are trying to the eyes) and in 24 pages of notes in small type—for those who desire further instruction—she portrays the ever-shifting rivalries, ambitions, intrigues, and sparkle of the sixteenth century in Italy. I doubt if the volume, for all its distinction, can be said entirely to come off ; it has the art neither of the novelist, nor of the historian, but rather an extraordinarily careful blend of both—and they are distinct arts in reality. But it is a remarkable portrait gallery, with successive Popes and every princeling of church and state and all the artists and others as well, with

the great Cardinal Bembo as a kind of central thread linking them all loosely together. Decidedly, and in every way, an unusual book.

★ ★ ★

The number of young people drifting about Europe and the Middle East and recording their adventures and impressions in print is no doubt a symptom, and a good one, of the deep, indeed the inevitable, interest that we all take to-day in the affairs of a very uneasy Continent. Among the latest is Christopher Sidgwick, whose *Whirlpools on the Danube* (Hutchinson, 18s. n.) follows on his *German Journey*. For the most part he is content to be personal and impressionistic and he describes his travels in Bavaria, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Transylvania with a lively pen and unflagging zest. His references to politics are generally indirect, but as he turns home he gives free reign to his reflections, as, for instance, when back in Vienna, he exclaims with emphasis and truth, 'Sometimes I think that the very worst moment for making peace is at the end of a war, at a time when men are savage animals and when every sort of decent feeling has been atrophied by years of struggling to keep a whole skin,' or when he calls Hitler 'a self-confessed somnambulist, a sleep-walker with a colossal influence on the minds of millions but no concrete knowledge or understanding of different opinions and other interests'—which is refreshing, if not exactly helpful. His conclusion, however, is saddening—'I have said that the rise of German influence is almost the most significant thing I have to report about this journey. It is. But *the* most significant thing is undoubtedly the fall of British prestige.' Let us at least hope that it has revived a little since 1936.

★ ★ ★

Mr. Gabriel Wells is with reason called the 'prince of book

collectors,' and he has also engaged for years in the amiable habit of making public comments, often only of a paragraph or so, on affairs national and international. Now, he has added these comments to his collection in the form of a volume entitled *Appeal to Common Sense* (Methuen, 7s. 6d. n.). The random paragraphs of few authors, even of a Will Rogers, can successfully overcome the perils of such preservation and Mr. Wells has increased his by declining alterations on principle: as a result repetitions occur dangerously and some of the comments now hardly seem worth reprinting. And yet they are the products of the observation of a cultured, travelled, and intelligent American citizen and as such naturally of interest: it is, for instance, extraordinarily interesting to find that in the course of a public address delivered in New York as recently as 1936 Mr. Wells stated in no indefinite terms that the Great War was due to the fact that in 1914 France saw her opportunity to deliver the blow of revenge against Germany for which she had been making ready ever since 1870. Does any other cultured, travelled, and intelligent American citizen share this belief? To an European it sounds incredible, but one never knows, and it perhaps explains much otherwise puzzling in the American attitude towards the difficulties of Europe.

★ ★ ★

A really good novel with an original setting and plot is a find, even in these days when novels are so many and the general average is high. I feel I can give that degree of eulogy to Mr. Hilton Brown's new story, *The Hare of Cloud* (Bles, 7s. 6d. n.). The title is not well chosen; it conveys nothing until one is committed to reading the book and, even then, it has no real relevance to the plot—but that is a small matter, though it may prevent the book winning the attention it deserves. The publishers describe Mr. Brown's

characters as 'almost violently alive': for once I do not quarrel greatly with a 'blurb.' Many of the characters at any rate have a streak of violence in them and all are alive. This is the story of a very new Scottish University, and the actions and reactions in and around it: it holds the interest throughout and the many pairs of characters are finely conceived and dexterously controlled. To my mind a novel of great merit, cordially to be recommended.

★ ★ ★

Anyone who is seeking for something quite different from the general run of imaginative work might, if he or she is classically (and not too classically) minded, try *A Trojan Ending* (Seizin-Constable, 8s. 6d.). Miss Laura Riding, not content with editing *Epilogue* twice a year, has attempted what seems to me an impossible task: the rewriting of the fall of Troy, not as history—for the real truth is too shadowy for that—and not really as fiction, but as a blend of the two, an attempted re-creation of the Homeric scene and heroes, as they might in real life have been. So we get fairly long solid sections which are purely informative interspersed with scenes and conversations in which Achilles, Hector, Helen, Cassandra, Cressida, and all the rest of the immortal throng act and talk as though they were rather pigmy people of to-day. Quite frankly, for all its cleverness and care, the book did not do more for my recollections of Homer than stir them very uncomfortably: Miss Riding nowhere intends parody or irreverence, but still the effect is to make me at least wish that the Homeric heroes could be left untroubled in that gigantic stature that has dominated imagination for so many centuries.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC, NO. 164.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 30th June.

'Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs and ——— ———'

1. 'With moth'd and ——— arras hung,
Mouldering her lute and books among
As when a queen, long dead, was young.'
2. 'Up the ——— mountain,
Down the rushy glen,'
(reversed)
3. 'Thou was not born for death, ——— Bird!'
4. 'A Maid, whom there were ——— to praise
And very few to love:'
5. 'And there were ——— bright with sinuous rills
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;'

Answer to Acrostic 162, April number: 'Now that *April*(s) *there*' (Browning: 'Home Thoughts from Abroad'). 1. *AthwarT* (Tennyson: 'In Memoriam'). 2. *PatH* (James Clarence Mangan: 'The Nameless One'). 3. *RemembrancE* (Keats: 'Ode to Psyche'). 4. *InneR* (Tennyson: 'Song of the Lotos Eaters'). 5. *Like* (Shelley: 'To a Skylark').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. R. F. Bates, Cases, Greatham, Liss, and Miss Holmes, Heatherlea, Rothbury, who are invited to choose books, as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*